

CONFIDENTIAL.

(9634.)

PART XX.

---

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

A F F A I R S   O F   P E R S I A .

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October to December 1909.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Persia.

PART XX.

[36434]

No. 1.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 1.)*

(No. 745.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 1, 1909.*

STEAM navigation on Lake Urmia.

Please see my telegrams Nos. 706 and 718 of the 31st August and the 6th September respectively.

I learn from his Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez that the manager of the Russian road, together with a secretary from the Russian consulate-general, are going to negotiate with Inam Kuli at Snjbulak for participation in the concession for Urmia navigation.

From a conversation which I have recently had with the Russian Minister I gather that, unless Inam Kuli makes the appointment of Stevens as paid manager an essential condition, the road company will not accept him.

[36435]

No. 2.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 1.)*

(No. 746.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Gulahek, October 1, 1909.*

DISTURBANCES near Lingah.

I learn by a report from the British consular agent at Lingah that Seyyid Hussein Lari, who has taken Bastak, is now threatening that port.

The immediate neighbourhood of Bunder Abbas is, His Majesty's consul reports, quiet, but, so long as this turbulent seyid remains uncontrolled, there is no hope of lasting tranquillity.

I am holding the Persian Government responsible for any losses which may result to British subjects from the seyid's action, and urging them to take measures for his speedy repression.

The Daria Beggi, who is now at Bunder Abbas, is dispatching a force for Lingah by the Persepolis. He assures our consul that no danger is to be feared there.

[36440]

No. 3.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 1.)*

(No. 747.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Tehran, October 1, 1909.*

EX-SHAH embarked, Enzeli, the 30th September for Russia.

[35732]

No. 4.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, Foreign Office, October 1, 1909.  
I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, in original, a despatch which has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,\* forwarding correspondence regarding the Turco-Persian boundary question, in so far as it relates to territory of the Sheikh of Mohammerrah.

It will be observed that, in view of certain conclusions arrived at by Lieutenant Wilson, Sir G. Barclay presumes that His Majesty's Government would be prepared, if the question were raised, to reconsider the ruling recorded in Sir E. Grey's despatch No. 75 of the 25th February, 1908, to Sir N. O'Connor, of which a copy is enclosed for facility of reference.

I am to state that, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, Lieutenant Wilson writes on knowledge of the history of the question, which is very incomplete, and he proposes, subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of State for India, to reply to Sir G. Barclay in the following sense:—

The circumstances in which the mediating commissioners of Great Britain and Russia defined the frontier from the Persian Gulf to Hawizch in 1850 are fully explained on p. 8 of the Foreign Office memorandum of the 8th December, 1906 (annexed), of which a copy is in the possession of His Majesty's Legation. While His Majesty's Government have no desire to disturb the frontier *status quo* as locally observed, and which, they are well aware, has never precisely coincided with the line as drawn in 1850 by the mediating commissioners, and indeed as subsequently accepted by the Persian Government, they would hesitate to approve Lieutenant Wilson's contention that the line as defined in 1850 was cancelled by any subsequent declaration of Great Britain and Russia. That line was, after an exhaustive examination of the conflicting claims of Persia and Turkey, defined by the mediating commissioners as an equitable compromise, and such evidence as there is goes to show that it was upheld by the later commission which met at Constantinople in 1875. His Majesty's Government could not, therefore, formally support the Sheikh of Mohammerrah in claiming that his frontier extends beyond that line, except after consultation with the Russian Government (who have a copy of the Foreign Office memorandum referred to) and as the result of an agreement with the Turkish Government, who are in possession of a copy of the map of 1850.

Sir E. Grey further proposes to instruct Sir G. Barclay to inform Lieutenant Wilson that the map enclosed in the latter's despatch No. 214 of the 12th June is that of the mediating commissioners of 1850.

I am to request that Sir G. Barclay's despatch and enclosures, which will be printed without the maps, may be returned to this department in due course.

I am, &c.  
F. A. CAMPBELL.

[35526]

No. 5.

Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received October 2.)

Sir, 3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London, October 1, 1909.  
I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th ultimo regarding the lease from Sheikh Morteza of a property at Shellifich.

We are forwarding a copy of your letter to our agent at Ahwaz, and are directing him to endeavour to persuade Sheikh Morteza to refer the question of ownership of the land to the Shari Court at Nejef, as originally proposed by himself, or failing that to make good his promise to our agent to substantiate his title to the land.

I have, &c.  
H. E. MACLEAN, Secretary.

\* Sir G. Barclay, No. 160, Confidential, September 9, 1909.

[36530]

No. 6.

Indo-European Telegraph Company to Foreign Office.—(Received October 2.)

Sir, 18, Old Broad Street, London, October 1, 1909.  
A FINANCIAL proposition has been submitted to the gentlemen whose names are given below—

J. Herbert Tritton, Esq.,  
Sir William R. Brooke, K.C.I.E.,  
The Right Honourable Sir Francis Mowatt, G.C.B.,  
Charles Holland, Esq., and  
H. F. B. Lynch, Esq., M.P.,

for the purpose of improving the communications between the port of Bandar Abbas, on the Persian Gulf, and Kerman, in Southern Persia.

Before taking any steps for the formation of a syndicate to obtain the necessary concessions from the Persian Government, those who are interested in the undertaking desire to know whether a scheme such as that indicated below would have the general approval of His Majesty's Government.

It is proposed to apply to the Persian Government for a concession for the construction of a caravan road between Bandar Abbas and Kerman, with powers to develop such caravan road into a cart road, and also to run motor traffic along it, and also to build a railway, should railways be permitted in Persia, either along the alignment of the road itself or by a track which may be found more convenient for the progress of a railway.

It is thought that the best alignment for the road would be via Minab, Rigan, and Bam, a length of approximately 430 miles.

The trade between Kerman on the one side and India on the other is very considerable, but is severely hampered by transport charges, and especially by the time at present occupied in traversing the distance between Kerman and Bandar Abbas.

It would be possible to construct a line of telegraph along the road as far as Bam, where the line would then link up with that recently constructed by the Indian Government. The new section—Bandar Abbas—Bam—could be worked by the Indo-European Telegraph Department as a part of its system.

I should explain that the Indo-European Telegraph Company (Limited), while taking a warm interest in the scheme as tending greatly to facilitate and develop communication between Southern Persia and India and the outside world, do not feel that the scheme falls within their legitimate province, and it is therefore intended to treat the proposed scheme as an entirely independent concern.

I have, &c.  
T. W. STRATFORD-ANDREWS.

[36603]

No. 7.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

Sir, Therapia, September 23, 1909.  
I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an extract from an article published in the "Tasvir-i-efkiar" of the 20th instant discussing the present international position of Persia. The writer advocates the revision of existing treaties between Persia and Turkey, and considers that a new Anglo-Russian agreement should be concluded, to which Turkey should be a party, for securing not the partition, but the future welfare of her neighbour. The views expressed at the end of the article as to the necessity of Turkey keeping order on the frontier are apparently not at present shared in Persia, for on the same day on which the article appeared the Persian Ambassador here was making fresh protests at the Porte with regard to Turkish encroachments and the establishment of telegraph lines in purely Persian territory.

I have, &c.  
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Extract from the "Tasvir-i-efkiar" of September 21, 1909.

IN the present article the writer, who has already communicated a number of letters from Tehran to this paper, *inter alia* condemns England for playing into the hands of Russia in the north of Persia in a manner that will enable that country to reinforce her political by an economic predominance there. England, however, is free in the South, and, though in a less degree than Russia, can assure her influence and her commerce. The writer thinks that both these countries ought to be politely reminded that there is a third State contiguous to Persia, and that this State is no longer a cipher. There should be a new agreement, not directed towards the partition of Persia, but to securing her future welfare, and Turkey should be a party to it. If Persia is closed to Turkey when the railway to Bagdad is completed, Turkey will be like a man beating his head against a wall. The treaties between Turkey and Persia need revision. Doubtless the new Persian Government realises Turkey's good-will and the existence of common interests, and will not create difficulties and repeat the mistake of having recourse to Russia and England in connection with trifling difficulties. The writer concludes by urging the necessity of Turkey's taking the lead in keeping order on the frontier, not expecting too much of Persia, and promoting her economic interests in that country.

[36799]

No. 8.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 4.)

Sir,

India Office, October 2, 1909.

WITH reference to the letter of this office of the 14th September, 1909, as to the situation at Abu Musa, I am directed by Viscount Morley to enclose copy of a telegram from the Government of India upon this question.

Subject to the concurrence of Secretary Sir E. Grey, Lord Morley would propose to address to that Government the telegram of which a draft is herewith transmitted.\*

I am, &c.

COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

September 27, 1909.

REFERENCE is invited to letter dated the 22nd ultimo from Resident, Persian Gulf, and letter dated the 1st instant from India Office to Foreign Office, respecting Abu Musa. We share view of Resident that, unless island is closed altogether to oxide industry, British interests and prestige in Gulf will be detrimentally affected by pledge given to German Government involving cessation of mining operations. If industry were closed altogether, question of compensating sheikh would be raised, and our position in the Gulf might be reacted upon. Please let us know whether communication has been made to German Government in terms suggested by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, vide letter dated the 23rd ultimo from Foreign Office to India Office.

[36788]

No. 9.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 748.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, October 4, 1909.

RUSSIAN troops at Tabreez.

Please see my telegram No. 727 of the 13th September (repeating Tabreez telegram No. 189).

\* Printed elsewhere.

I learn from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez that the Russian Government have replied to the inquiry referred to in the above telegram to the effect that the decision of the question of the reduction of troops has been left in the hands of the new Russian Minister at Tehran.

M. Pokrowski tells me that he has recommended to his Government that a substantial reduction should forthwith be effected.

[37075]

No. 10.

Note communicated by the Russian Ambassador October 5, 1909.

SAAD-OUH-DOWLEH, qui se trouve incognito à Saint-Petersbourg, décrit la situation en Perse en couleurs très sombres; il est d'avis que la Russie et l'Angleterre, en vue de prévenir de grands malheurs, devraient insister à ce qu'un Sénat soit convoqué en même temps que le Medjiss, dans le but de contrebalancer l'influence de ce dernier. La création d'un Sénat fait partie des lois fondamentales édictées par l'ancien Medjiss. L'opinion de Saad semble justifiée au Ministère Impérial, qui trouverait désirable que les Ministres d'Angleterre et de Russie soient munis d'instructions à ce sujet.

[36915]

No. 11.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 5.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 29th September, relative to the Shiraz escort.

India Office, October 4, 1909.

Inclosure in No. 11.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

September 29, 1909.

HIS Majesty's Minister at Tehran suggests that Shiraz escort should, at any rate until end of next year, be maintained at present strength in view of disturbed state of province. Suggestion is supported by Foreign Office. Please let me have your observations by telegraph. It seems to me doubtful whether it is legitimate to regard this as a directly Indian interest.

[37266]

No. 12.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 275.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 5, 1909.

COUNT BENCKENDORFF came to tell me to-day that he was going away for a holiday.

I took the opportunity of impressing upon him the importance of a reduction in the number of Russian troops in Persia. I told him it was becoming difficult to explain the continued presence of such a large number of troops while things continued quiet.

Count Benckendorff said that things were not altogether quiet. Incidents were constantly occurring, and he thought it would be difficult to withdraw all the troops.

I replied that I had not spoken of complete withdrawal, though of course I should be very glad if the Russians considered such a step to be possible and safe. I had mentioned only reduction. The Persian Governor of Tabreez appeared to be a really good man, who would work with the Russians, and I was constantly impressing upon the Persian Government that it was in their interest to be on good terms with Russia. But the retention of so large a number of Russian troops galled Persian feeling.

[1684]

C

Count Benckendorff asked whether I had lately had complaints from the Persians on the subject.

I said that I had not heard from them lately, because the answers I had given to the Persian Minister here had not encouraged him to make representations to me. I had taken the line with him that this question of troops was one between Persia and Russia, and that Russia must judge for herself what the situation required for the safeguarding of her interests. I pointed out to Count Benckendorff, however, that if, when the Medjliss met, the Persian Government could point to a substantial reduction in the number of Russian troops this would undoubtedly have a good effect on Persian feeling. It would be regarded by the Persians as evidence of good faith on this part of Russia, and would make it more easy for them to show a trustful and friendly spirit.

Count Benckendorff told me that, as far as he personally was concerned, he was entirely of my opinion on this point.

I said that I had spoken to him now in order that when he was in St. Petersburg he might impress upon the Russian Government the importance which I attached to the point. I heard that the Russian Minister at Tehran had already expressed the opinion that a reduction of troops was possible. Things might, therefore, already be moving in the right direction. But if this were not so, and if Count Benckendorff were unable to say in St. Petersburg that I had spoken to him on the subject before he left London, the importance which I attached to it might not be understood.

Count Benckendorff told me that his Government greatly appreciated the way in which Sir George Barclay had co-operated with M. Sabline at Tehran.

In reply, I expressed my very warm appreciation of M. Sabline's loyal attitude. He had shown true statesmanship, under very difficult circumstances, in laying the foundation of co-operation.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) E. GREY.

[35934]

No. 13.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 5, 1909.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 19th August, respecting the proposal to retain for Lieutenant Wilson's use in his work on the Kharka irrigation scheme a part of the oil guard hitherto in the employ of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, I am directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to you, for Viscount Morley's information, copy of a telegram from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,\* stating that the cost of the proposed escort for Lieutenant Wilson would amount to 200. per month for four or five months.

I am to state that, as soon as Secretary Sir Edward Grey learns that Lord Morley has submitted to the Council of India the proposal that a moiety of the expense of retaining a portion of the oil guard should be borne by Indian revenues, he will request the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury to sanction the charge of the other moiety on Imperial funds.

I am also to transmit to you copy of a further telegram from Sir G. Barclay,† reporting that the oil guard left Mohammrah on the 25th ultimo. As Sir G. Barclay was instructed on the 23rd August to retain the number of guard required, and only to send back the remainder, Sir Edward Grey assumes that this telegram refers only to the portion of the guard no longer required at Mohammrah.

I am, &c.  
F. A. CAMPBELL.

[37106]

No. 14.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.-(Received October 7.)*

(No. 173.)

*Gulahek, September 18, 1909.*

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 148 of the 29th July, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch which I have received from Lieutenant

\* No. 689, Part XIX.

† No. 693, Part XIX.

Ranking respecting the shares to which the Bakhtiari khans are entitled in the companies formed to exploit oil in their country.

This despatch is a reply to a telegram of mine, in which I directed Lieutenant Ranking to point out to the manager of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company that the letter he had addressed to the khans in April last (see inclosure No. 1 in my despatch No. 148) had left them under a false impression as to the shares to which they were entitled.

In view of Lieutenant Ranking's observations, I have thought it well to instruct him to postpone writing to the manager, as I had previously directed, pending a clear statement from the company as to the allotment of shares to the khans. But while instructing Lieutenant Ranking in this sense, I have informed him that I am unable to agree with his interpretation of article 2 of the agreement between Mr. D'Arcy and the khans in 1903, and have explained that that agreement had reference solely to oil in the Bakhtiari country, and that article 2 clearly refers to shares in companies formed for the working of oil in that country, of which I understand there are now two in existence, viz., the first Exploitation Company and the Bakhtiari Oil Company.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 14.

*Consul Ranking to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 76.)

*Camp, Isfahan, August 4, 1909.*

Sir,

IN accordance with your Excellency's telegram No. 26 on the subject of the oil shares due to the Bakhtiari khans, I have the honour to submit the following observations:—

1. It would appear from the clause in this agreement between Mr. W. K. D'Arcy and the khans, an extract of which is attached herewith, that such remuneration, outside an increase of guard money, as is due to the khans is to be calculated not on the capital of any one company or companies, but on the number of ordinary shares issued and fully paid up.

2. I would beg to point out that it most distinctly states in this clause that "3 per cent. of all the ordinary shares issued," &c., shall be given; and, further, that no allocation of shares has been made to the various companies whereby the oil company could justify the allotment to the khans of a smaller number of shares as being the "3 per centage" of so many shares appertaining to such and such companies working in Bakhtiari country, instead of 3 per cent. on the total of shares issued (600,000) and fully paid up, as is apparently their due.

3. That there is no stated connection between the words "after formation of one or more companies to work oil in the Bakhtiari country" and the words "3 per cent. of all the ordinary shares issued."

It appears that the intention, at the time when the agreement was made, was to give the khans 3 per cent. of the total number of ordinary shares issued, otherwise some determinatory expression, such as "appertaining to the companies working in Bakhtiari country," would have been inserted after the word "issued," thereby clearly limiting the number of shares due to the khans to 3 per cent. of those appertaining to the company or companies working in the Bakhtiari country.

To sum up, then, it would appear that the khans have a quite justifiable argument, based on the wording of the share clause of the agreement, in claiming 3 per cent. of the total number of shares issued.

I have not as yet communicated with the manager of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company on this subject, but await your Excellency's further decision on the subject, which I have the honour to request that you will communicate to me by telegram.

I have, &c.  
S. RANKING,  
Lieutenant, Indian Army.

## Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

*Extract from Agreement between Mr. W. K. D'Arcy and the Concessions Syndicate on the one side, hereinafter called the First Party, and the Bakhtiari Khans, on the other, hereinafter called the Second Party.*

... FURTHER also, after the formation of one or more companies to work oil in the Bakhtiari country, and after the oil is passed through the pipes, the first party undertakes to give to the second party 3 per cent. of all the ordinary shares issued, which shares must be fully paid up. . . .

[37175]

No. 15.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 178.)

Sir,

Gulabek, September 22, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 162 of the 22nd August, 1909, I have the honour to forward a provisional scheme, prepared by Mr. Acting Consul Bill and Mr. J. C. Smith, of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, for the policing of the Bushire-Ispahan road by means of telegraph ghollams.

I make no attempt to comment on the details of this scheme, as time is of importance, and I wish to send Mr. Bill's despatch by to-day's post in order that it may, if possible, reach you while Major Cox is still in England, so that you may have the opportunity of discussing it with him. Major Cox is better able than I to judge whether the proposed scheme would be likely to prove more effective than a grant of subsidies to the local chiefs. I notice Mr. Bill does not favour the latter, and, indeed, if the tribes are as free from the control of their chiefs as Mr. Bill describes them as being, a system of subsidies might prove ineffective; still it would have the advantage of being easier of acceptance for the Persian Government, and it would not have the disadvantage of arousing the antagonism of the local chiefs towards the Telegraph Department.

I notice that Mr. Bill estimates the cost of the working of his scheme at something under 8,000*l.* a year, a sum which I imagine would, if used in subsidies dependent on results, suffice as an effective inducement to the local chiefs to do their utmost to maintain order and to prevent illegal exactions.

I have, &amp;c.

G. BARCLAY.

## Inclosure 1 in No. 15.

Acting Consul Bill to Sir G. Barclay.

(No. 36.)

Sir,

Shiraz, September 1, 1909.

IN accordance with instructions contained in your telegram No. 76, dated the 25th August, 1909, I have the honour to forward a provisional scheme prepared by myself, in concert with Mr. J. C. Smith, assistant superintendent, Indo-European Telegraph Department, Shiraz, to whom in especial the estimates for buildings are entirely due, while his long experience and thorough knowledge of the local conditions have been of the greatest value in the preparation of the scheme generally.

On the assumption that if the scheme as sketched meets with your approval it will reach the Foreign Office before the departure from London of His Majesty's resident in the Persian Gulf, I have not sent a copy to Bushire.

I have, &amp;c.

J. H. BILL, I.C.S.

## Inclosure 2 in No. 15.

Provisional Scheme prepared by Acting Consul Bill, in co-operation with Mr. Smith.

## 1. Preliminary.

BEFORE entering upon the numerical and financial details of the proposed force it is desirable to set out clearly its task, its character, and its limitations.

Its task is to keep the telegraph line from being constantly bulleted by casual marksmen, to keep the caravan road clear of casual marauders, to prevent the exactions of illegal dues of every kind, to obtain information of intended raids, and in the latter case to hold up caravans till, under the orders of the inspector, a sufficient force has been assembled to drive off the anticipated raiders.

The obstacles in the way consist of (a) the local khans and (b) the nomads. Of these, the former are important factors at the southern end of the road, from Bushire to Kazeroon, the latter, slightly overlapping, from Konaraktch to Ispahan. The former would be strongly opposed to the new force, less on account of its interference with direct depredation than on account of its prohibition of the innumerable illegal exactions which they now levy upon the trade. The success of the scheme would, in fact, effect an enormous reduction in the income of each of the chiefs. The principal men concerned are the Khans of Chalkatah and Angahi in the maritime plain, the Zabit of Borasjoon, Mir Muhammad Beg of Duliki, and Haidar Khan of Kanariji. They are, however, far too deeply divided by intestine quarrels to unite even against a common menace of this character. The nomad chiefs, on the other hand, would be less fundamentally affected, as the new force would merely prevent the direct robberies, which do not form an essential source of any chief's income, though no doubt the percentage of stolen property which falls to the chief's lot is an attractive windfall. They would, however, have a natural objection to anything smacking of law and order.

By far the most effective method of dealing with these gentry would of course be the employment of military force adequate not only to provide the every-day police of the road, but also to punish by its own strength any village or tribe infringing the "Pax Perso-Britannica" which it is intended to establish. Such a force does not exist in Fars, and there are no signs that it is to be found anywhere in Persia. If it is to be employed it must come from outside, i.e., from India.

It cannot be too emphatically stated that, for the immediate object in view, the direct employment of British troops is in every way preferable. It would cut at the root of the evil of which the present scheme does not pretend to be more than a palliative. It is only if the employment of British troops is judged impracticable for political reasons that the scheme set out below is worthy of examination as a *pis aller*.

It results from the above that the proposed force is not a military, nor even a military police, force. It will confine its operations strictly to the actual route which it has to guard, and its numbers are as insufficient as its organisation is misadvised for anything in the nature of a punitive expedition, even on the most modest scale. All that it could be would be to force marauders to work on such a scale as to make the responsibility of the chiefs concerned not only clear but conspicuous, and it would then be for the Persian Government to deal with them as best it could.

It is obvious that the weak point of the scheme lies just here. At the present moment the Khansh tribes, under the nominal control of Kawan-ul-Mulk, are absolutely out of hand, and obey no one at all but their own headmen, and that imperfectly. The Kasgiri for the moment yield a fairly general obedience to Soulet-ed-Dowleh, but he has many enemies, both within the tribe and at Tehran, and the appointment of his brother, Zeigham-ed-Dowleh, would suffice to break up the tribe into sections and reduce them to the same condition of lawlessness as the Khansh.

The Kuhgelu have obeyed and will obey no one at all, not even their own chiefs. And the village chiefs of the south habitually treat the Fars Government with open contempt.

Under these circumstances, little support can be looked for from the Persian Government just where it is most needed, namely, to prevent concerted action against the new force, which, if undertaken by any considerable khan or tribe, would be quite irresistible by the force as provided in the scheme.

There is only one remedy for this difficulty, and it is one which any perhaps he considered to go far to diminish the political advantage of the scheme over the direct employment of force. That remedy is for the local British consular authorities to be authorised to explain verbally to the chiefs concerned that the British Government means to see this road put in order, that the new scheme is an attempt to do this by local Persian agency, which it is to the interest of the local chiefs to favour, but that if the scheme is brought to nothing by the incorrigible misbehaviour of the inhabitants it will be replaced by a British force capable of enforcing the maintenance of order by punitive expeditions and arrest and punishment of the guilty parties.

There is a certain temptation to propose a system of allowances as practised on the Indian frontier, but I am strongly of opinion that such a proposal is to be deprecated. The Persian is not a Pathan; he is easily frightened by a resolute attitude, and quick to recover confidence on any symptoms of weakness; and it is, in my opinion, of great importance to establish at the start the fundamental principle that all forms of impost on interal trade are and must remain absolutely unbolished. The only form of pecuniary advantage which might properly be offered to the local khans and nomad chiefs is a percentage—say 5 per cent.—on the pay of the ghilans recruited by their means. By an adroit use of this bait the recruiting officers might contrive to attract to the support of the force a sufficient proportion of the chiefs to make a strong hostile coalition impossible. But the only solid foundation for the scheme, which will certainly be unpopular at the start, is fear; and as there is nothing in Persia for the tribes to be afraid of, it must be fear of the British Government.

The numerical and financial proposals set out below must be considered in the light of the above statement. They represent the lowest estimate upon which it can reasonably be hoped that the tasks above limited can be performed, at any rate at the outset; but it will probably be admitted that an annual expenditure of 7,000*l.* on the protection of a trade of an annual value of over 1,000,000*l.* over a route 490 miles in length is exceedingly moderate, and admits of considerable expansion before rejecting it on the exclusive ground of cost. On this point, however, a caveat should be entered; it must not be imagined that a force of this character, by mere numerical expansion, can be made capable of undertaking tasks for which its organisation does not fit it. Any expansion in the cadre as proposed should be directed to enabling the force more completely to fulfil the limited functions assigned to it above, and no increase of strength would enable it to undertake punitive expeditions or the policing of the district as distinct from that of the telegraph line and road. It is very doubtful whether the former task could be satisfactorily performed by any Persian force whatever; but if it is to be attempted it must be by a force organised by military officers on a military basis. That is another proposal which might, if required, be elaborated; the object at present is to make clear that the scheme at present proposed is not of a military but essentially of a civil character.

The proposals must of course be absolutely experimental, and based on the broad circumstances of the road. It is probable that experiment would speedily prove the necessity for numerous modifications on points of detail. Moreover, as the conditions on different sections of the road differ radically according to the season, it must be understood that the fullest latitude would have to be practised in the temporary transfer of men from one section or post to another according to the position of the nomad tribes. The reasons for the suggested distribution will be found in the following detailed examination of the conditions of the road from north to south—

## 2. Distribution.

(This is shown in tabular form in Table 1).

*Section 1.*—Ispahan—Khaneh Khurreh—175 miles; seventy men; head-quarters Abadeh.

On the northern, or Irak, portion of this section I am not competent to report. It would, however, appear from the Ispahan diaries that serious robberies are not very frequent on this part of the road; but it is likely that energetic patrolling from Abadeh to Yazdikhist might divert the attention of the Boir Alundai marauders to the Irak portion of the road, and for this reason alone it would be necessary to apply the scheme to the entire route. Now far twenty men at Kunishch would suffice for this His Majesty's consul-general at Ispahan will be in a position to estimate.

The stretch from Yazdikhist to Abadeh is the most directly dangerous part of the whole road. It is the happy hunting-ground of the Boir Alundai tribe, who have been entirely beyond control for many years. They have no recognised chief, the last two having been killed by members of the tribe, and no connection with Shiraz, so that there is no means whatever except force of putting pressure on them. Their winter rendezvous, and market, is Behbahan, which is seldom or never under the effective control of the Persian authorities. They are a small tribe, but enjoy a great reputation for bravery and marksmanship among the ardent warriors who compose, with few exceptions, the rest of the population of Fars. In October 1908 a party of them waylaid a caravan guarded by Khusrav Khan, Kalantar of Surmeh, who was the only headman in that neighbourhood who had shown any capacity for resisting the robbers, and after prolonged rifle-fire killed Khusrav himself and two others, and carried

off a caravan of some sixty mules. They might thus be expected to offer organised resistance to the establishment of the new force, and fifty men between Abadeh and Yazdikhist would be none too many to hold them in check. In fact, fifty men would be clearly insufficient were it not for the fact that the twenty men at Kunishch and the fifty men of the second section could be drawn upon by telephone in case of need.

No provision has been made for permanent posts between Abadeh and Delhid, as this portion of the road is usually quiet, but if found necessary men could be stationed either at Surmeh or Khumeh Khurreh.

*Section 2.*—Khaneh Khurreh—Shiraz—head-quarters Siveud; 137 miles; fifty men.

The governing factor on this section would be the migratory Khamshah tribes. Their first appearance north of Shiraz generally takes place about the end of March, at which time it would be necessary to mass the fifty men allotted to this section in the southern portion of it, to proceed gradually northwards to Delhid as the migration develops. The same course would be followed with the autumn migration. During winter this tract is almost deserted, and thirty at least of the men would be available to reinforce the other sections in case of need. The strength has been fixed as low as possible, and it would depend on the attitude of the tribes how far it would be sufficient, especially as the spring and autumn would also be a time of pressure on the third section, owing to the simultaneous migration of the Kashgai. The Khamshah tribes have, however, never given any proof of daring or enterprise, and it is probable that a hint warning to the kalantars that this scheme was intended to be successful, with a stern threat, in the event of its failure, other and more effective means, involving severe penalties for themselves, would be employed, would suffice to prevent anything in the nature of an organised resistance, while fifty men skilfully employed should suffice to provide against the casual marauder, or the marksman choosing a telegraph insulator for his target.

*Section 3.*—Shiraz—Bushire—seventy men; head-quarters Kuzroou; 178 miles. The governing factor on this section would be the attitude of the Kashgai, which it is quite impossible to forecast. In the presence of a strong ikhahi, who could be worked upon by means of the same language as has been suggested above in the case of the Arab kalantars, the Kashgai could probably be trusted to behave themselves, and ninety men would be ample to keep the road protected against the local village thief. Indeed, most of the robberies of late years are traceable to the road-guards themselves. It must be admitted, however, that, in the event of the Kashgais, or several sections of them, being beyond the control of their ikhahi, the force proposed would in itself be quite insufficient to withstand them, but in that case the support of some at least of the headmen and chiefs on the road might be confidently relied on, as these men are in a constant state of feud with the Kashgai.

In the extreme south the opposition, open or secret, of the Khan of Borsajoon might be confidently expected, and it would be necessary to warn him plainly that if he proved himself an obstacle to the success of a scheme to be worked by Persians he would be removed if necessary by the employment of a British force. This threat would of course open the door to much talk of concealed intervention, but I regard it as an absolute necessity if the force as constituted is to have any chance of success. The same language would have to be used to the Tangistan chiefs, and the only question on which there may reasonably be some doubt is whether a fourth section under a British officer may not have to be constituted, stretching from Bushire to Daliki bridge, with head-quarters at Borsajoon.

## 3. Organisation.

(A.) *Officers.*—One European inspector on 400 rupies; two European inspectors on 350 rupies (3,520 toman). It is clear that the success or failure of the scheme must depend mainly on the qualities of the three European inspectors. As already indicated, the scheme as sketched is not intended to be a military scheme; on the contrary, it is expressly intended as the last and only alternative to the adoption of military measures.

This being so, it would be the duty of these officers to know the conditions of their sections thoroughly, to be well acquainted with and respected by the individual chiefs and headmen—to work, in fact, more by diplomacy than by force.

In view of the absolute veto on all forms of toll suggested above, their main means of influencing the chiefs would lie in the proposed percentage of 5 per cent. on

the pay of the recruits accepted from their village or tribe. This would probably be necessary to prevent the chiefs from putting a veto on recruitment from the outset, and would provide a weapon in the hands of the inspectors, who would be authorised to make deductions from the sum thus raised in the case of misconduct by the headmen concerned.

For inspectors a good knowledge of colloquial Persian, experience of Persian ways, excellent bodily health, and great energy would be required. From one point of view the principal enemies of the force would be the gholams themselves, who would naturally be quite unable to understand at first that petty exactions from muleteers constituted a crime punishable by instant dismissal. The inspector would have to be constantly in motion and extremely vigilant. It is clear that such men would require very careful selection, and nothing but pure Europeans of picked quality would be any use.

(B) *Armenian Clerks*.—Two on 150 ruppees, two on 100 ruppees (1,120 tomanis). These would be necessary as telegraphists and centres of information. They are intended to occupy the offices (at present in telephonic communication only) at Kunisheh, Siveid, Dashtarjin, and Konartaklitch, and would no doubt deal with a certain amount of local traffic. They would also assist the inspector in the clerical work of accounts, &c., which in the case of a force of seventy men would not be inconsiderable, and ought not to be allowed to distract the inspector from his primary duty of constant inspection.

(C) *Gholams*.—The pay, 12 tomanis, includes provision and keep of a horse, these being the terms on which the present gholams are recruited. The senior ghlam at each post would be placed in charge and given an allowance of 3 tomanis per mensem. They would be recruited by the inspector in their districts. The gholambashis must be able to do all the work of the present gholams in the direction of repairs, &c., and it would probably be possible to make this a condition for the entire force after it had been in existence a few years.

The duties of the gholams would be—

1. Constant patrolling of the line and high-road in groups of two or four, according to circumstances.
2. Escorting caravans under the inspector's orders in case of anticipated robbery.
3. Collection of information relative to intended raids.

No drill would be expected of them, but a certain allowance of practice ammunition would be supplied to be fired under the immediate supervision of the inspector.

The men would be in uniform and would supply their own horses.

#### 4. Equipment.

The only equipment necessary would be rifles, bandoliers, and ammunition. Two telescopes or field glasses per post, to be in charge of the gholambashis, might be allowed. Rifle-racks and ammunition-chests would also be required in each post, with a field telephone.

#### 5. Accommodation.

The proposed distribution being avowedly experimental, it would be advisable to spend as little on buildings as possible until experience has shown where they would be mainly required. There can, however, be little doubt as to the suitability of the proposed head-quarters, Abadeh, Siveid, and Kazeroon, at each of which places some building would be necessary. At the other proposed posts there are large but in many cases ruinous public caravanserais, in which, under present arrangements, a room is usually reserved for the use of the officers of the department. It would be no hardship on the travelling public, but, on the contrary, a considerable advantage, if it entailed a certain amount of repairs, for several rooms to be similarly reserved for the use of the new force.

The buildings proposed need little explanation. At Abadeh, the head-quarters of an European officer with thirty men, both a house and gholams' quarters would be necessary; at Siveid there is already ample accommodation for the officer, and all that would be required would be quarters for the men; while at Kazeroon it is proposed to begin by constructing quarters for the officer and housing the men at first in one of the numerous large caravanserais existing in the town. The reason for this proposal is twofold: (a) it is difficult to estimate how the force to be employed on this section

would be best distributed, and (b) building at Kazeroon is expensive. The building at Dashtarjin is necessitated by the facts that (a) there is no caravanserai and (b) Dashtarjin is an excellent centre for the patrol of the Pir-i-Zan Pass on the one side and of the Sim Safid Pass on the other.

J. H. BILL, I.C.S.

TABLE I.—DISTRIBUTION LIST.

Post.	Number of Men.	Nature of Accommodation.	Remarks.
<b>Section 1. Isfahan-Khaush Khurroh—</b>			
Kunisheh .. ..	20	Caravanserai	
Yezdikhist .. ..	10	"	
Shulgistan .. ..	10	"	
Abadeh .. ..	30	Special building ..	Head-quarters of inspector, section 1.
	— 70		
<b>Section 2. Abadeh-Shiraz—</b>			
Dehbid .. ..	10	Caravanserai	
Murghab .. ..	10	Accommodation in village.	
Siveid .. ..	20	Special building ..	Head-quarters of inspector, section 2.
Zarghoon .. ..	10	Caravanserai	
	— 50		
	120		
<b>Section 3. Shiraz-Bashure—</b>			
Dashtarjin .. ..	20	Special building	
Kazeroon .. ..	20	Caravanserai and inspector's house	Head-quarters of inspector, section 3.
Kanarij .. ..	10	Caravanserai	
Konartaklitch .. ..	10	"	
Bonajoon .. ..	20	"	
Almudi .. ..	10	"	
	— 90		
	210		
Reserve for leave, &c. ..	20		
	—		
Total .. ..	230		

TABLE II.—SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES.

	Tomanis.	£
Schedule 1—Pay .. ..	39,920	7,258
Schedule 2—Repairs .. ..	230	44
Schedule 3—Renewal of equipment and ammunition .. ..	1,490	279
Schedule 4—Capital charges, 17,745 tomanis, 10 per cent. interest .. ..	1,774	320
and sinking fund on capital charges .. ..	1,774	320
Total gross annual cost .. ..	43,414	7,895
Deduct—		
(a) Cost of existing gholams .. ..	2,984	
(b) Wilful damage account .. ..	1,600	
	4,584	833
Total net annual cost to Persian Government .. ..	38,830	7,062

SCHEDULE 1.—RECURRING EXPENDITURE in tomanis per annum.

1. PAY.	Tomanis.
1 European inspector, at 100 ruppees per mensem .. ..	3,520
2 European inspectors, at 50 ruppees per mensem .. ..	1,120
1 Armenian clerk, at 150 ruppees per mensem .. ..	33,120
2 Armenian clerks, at 100 ruppees per mensem .. ..	5,011
230 gholams, at 12 tomanis per mensem .. ..	1,656
Allowance to 14 gholambashis, at 3 tomanis per mensem .. ..	
Chief's allowance of 5 per cent. on gholams' pay .. ..	39,920

## SCHEDULE 2.—REPAIRS.

		Tomana.
Abadeh .. .. .	80	
Sivond .. .. .	45	
Dashjarin .. .. .	45	
Kazeroon .. .. .	50	
	230	

## SCHEDULE 3.—RENEWAL of Equipment.

Ammunition .. .. .	£	55
Wear and tear of rifles, &c., 10 per cent. on first cost .. .. .	212	
Total .. .. .	267	

## SCHEDULE 4.—CAPITAL charges.

## 1. BUILDINGS.

	Tomana.
(a) <i>Abadeh</i> .—Head-quarters of first section. Residence for inspector and quarters for thirty guards. Inspector's residence to consist of three rooms and bath-rooms, with a front verandah, cook-house, stable, two store-rooms, and w.c.; ghulam's quarters, three living-rooms, cook-house, two store-rooms, w.c., and stable for thirty horses .. .. .	2,127
(b) <i>Sivond</i> .—Head-quarters second section. For gend of twenty men. Inspector will occupy rooms in the telegraph quarters. Two rooms, cook-house, two store-rooms, stable for twenty horses, and w.c. .. .. .	730
(c) <i>Dashjarin</i> .—For gend of thirty men. Three rooms, cook-house, two store-rooms for fodder, stable for thirty horses, and w.c. to be built adjoining present telegraph office .. .. .	1,184
(d) <i>Kazeroon</i> .—Head-quarters for third section. Three rooms and bath-room, with verandah at front. Cook-house, stable, two store-rooms, and w.c. .. .. .	1,978
Total .. .. .	6,019

## 2. ARMS.

	Tomana.	£
250 rifles (twenty reserve) at 8 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> each .. .. .	11,687	2,125
(This calculation is based on the assumption that 303 rifles at first-rate quality will be supplied. This appears to be a regrettable necessity, as almost every robber is furnished with a repeating rifle.)		

## 3. FIELD TELEPHONES.

Seven at 1 <i>l.</i> each .. .. .	58	7
Total .. .. .	17,745	3,226

## TABLE III.—ROBBERIES as reported by this Consulate.

## TOTAL Number of Robberies in three years.

		January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Total.
Section 1. Yazdikhasht-Abadeh ..	1	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	3	2	..	8	
.. 2. Abadeh-Shiraz ..	1	1	1	1	3	..	..	2	3	2	4	3	24	
.. 3. Shiraz-Bushire ..	8	4	5	2	9	3	6	7	7	2	7	..	60	

N.B.—This does not by any means represent the total number of robberies in the period, but only those which for one reason or another have been recorded by this consulate.

[37192]

No. 16.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 749.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, October 7, 1909.

RUSSIAN troops in Persia.

I consider that the present moment would be a very good one for the recall of the Russian force stationed at Kazvin. The Enzeli-Tehran road is as safe as it always has been, and order has been perfectly maintained throughout in the capital. Lately there have been fewer signs of anti-Russian agitation, but with the continued presence of troops at Kazvin they will doubtless recur. There has been no occasion for the troops to deal with the dangers which they were intended to combat. As regards the future, although it is impossible to say for certain that disturbances may not occur, the present moment is so opportune for the recall of the Russian troops, and the possibility of danger to foreigners, in my opinion, so remote, that the occasion should not be lost for carrying out a step which, in the event of the anti-Russian feeling being fanned into open agitation, would become more difficult for Russia to take by a good grace.

On two occasions I have pointed out to M. Poklewski the temptation that is offered while the Russian troops are stationed at Kazvin to persons who desire the entry of a Russian force into the capital to bring about such a state of affairs in Tehran as would justify this step, but I fear that, although in the cases of Smirnow and Sadowsky the Persian Government have promised him satisfaction (see my telegram No. 733 of the 20th September), I have made no impression.

I defer again approaching my Russian colleague until I know whether you see your way to taking steps at St. Petersburg in view of the opinion that I have expressed above.

[35727]

No. 17.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

(No. 141.)

Foreign Office, October 7, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 163 of the 27th August regarding the intrigues of the mirza of the German vice-consulate with Seyyid Murteza, and his suspected connection with the illicit traffic in arms.

I concur in the views expressed by you in the second and third paragraphs of your despatch under reply, and I approve your action in dispatching instructions in this sense to Major Cox.

I am, &amp;c.

E. GREY.

[37192]

No. 18.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 1316.)

Foreign Office, October 7, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.

RUSSIAN troops in Persia. See telegram No. 749 of to-day's date from Tehran.

Count Benckendorff came to see me on the 5th instant before leaving for St. Petersburg, and I took the opportunity of representing to him that I considered it of great importance that a portion of the Russian troops in Persia should be withdrawn without delay. Persian public opinion naturally resented the presence in such force of Russian troops, and I submitted to him that it could not fail to produce a good effect if it were found, on the assembly of the Medjlis, that the number of troops had been considerably reduced. Such a reduction would induce the Persians to exhibit a more friendly spirit, since they would regard it as a proof of good faith on the part of the Russian Government.

You should make it clear to the Russian Government how important I consider this question to be when a suitable occasion presents itself.



[37203]

No. 19.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 8.)*

(No. 451.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 7, 1909.*

## REDUCTION of Russian troops.

I have just received telegram No. 749 of to-day's date from Sir G. Barclay, and had already spoken yesterday to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the withdrawal or reduction of the troops. I had enquired at the same time whether the Russian Government were yet in receipt of the opinion of their Minister for which they had been waiting. M. Sazonow observed that both the Imperial Government and their Minister in Tehran were most desirous to effect a reduction in the number of troops at Tabreez, but I can hardly say that he gave me any definite promise, though I pressed him on the point. He said that the question of finding winter quarters at Tabreez for the men would be a difficult one: this is a good thing, as reduction may be thereby expedited. He gave me to understand, as regards the troops at Kazvin, that for the moment there was no question of reduction. I will continue to urge the Russian Government to reduce the troops both at Tabreez and also at Kazvin, but their attitude in this matter is difficult to understand, and by no means satisfactory, as they do not appear to be at all so anxious to reduce their troops as they were formerly.

[163530]

No. 20.

*Foreign Office to Board of Trade.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 8, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to you, for the information of the Board of Trade, copy of a letter from the Indo-European Telegraph Company, enquiring whether His Majesty's Government would be disposed to give their general approval to a scheme submitted to certain gentlemen named, and having as its object the improvement of the communications between Bunder Ahlbas and Kerman.

As the projected road would lie entirely within the British sphere of influence, as defined in the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, Sir E. Grey is disposed to give a favourable reply to this enquiry, provided that the Board of Trade consider that the names mentioned afford an adequate guarantee of financial respectability. I am to request that you will be so good as to furnish me with the views of the Board of Trade on this point.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[36530]

No. 21.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 8, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to you, for Viscount Morley's information, copy of a letter from the Indo-European Telegraph Company, enquiring whether His Majesty's Government would give their general approval to a scheme submitted to certain gentlemen named, and having as its object the improvement of the communications between Bunder Ahlbas and Kerman.

It will be observed that the projected road falls entirely within the British sphere of influence as defined in the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907. Sir Edward Grey is disposed to return a favourable reply to the company's enquiry, provided that the Board of Trade, to whom a letter has been addressed on this subject, consider that the names mentioned afford adequate guarantee of financial respectability. Before replying, however, Sir Edward Grey would be glad to learn whether Viscount Morley has any observations to make in regard to the proposed concession.

I am, &amp;c.

W. LANGLEY.

[36799]

No. 22.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 8, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant regarding the situation at Ahn Musa, and to inform you that Sir Edward Grey concurs in the terms of the draft telegram enclosed therein, which Viscount Morley proposes to dispatch to the Viceroy of India on the subject.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[37416]

No. 23.

*Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received October 9.)*

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,  
October 8, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to enclose, for your information, a copy of a letter received from our agent at Tehran on the subject of the Tehran-Kuun road. Traffic is freely passing over this road as well as over the road from Ahwaz on the Karun River to Isfahan. We think it due to the new Government that we should bring this fact to the knowledge of His Majesty's Government.

Prior to his departure for Persia, the Sardar-i-Assad (Haji Ali Kuli Khan, Bakhtiari) visited Sir Charles Hardinge and made known to Sir Charles Hardinge the objects which he had in view in returning to his native country. He seems to have kept his word, and there can be no question as to the pacifying influence which he has exercised over the Bakhtiari chiefs and in the affairs of Persia generally. According to our information the Bakhtiari chiefs have made considerable sacrifices, having sold lands in the south in order to meet the expenses to which they have been put. But they have refrained from the ambitious designs which were attributed to them, and in particular attributed to the Sardar-i-Assad. Our intercourse with this chief during recent years has been of an increasingly friendly character; he seems to have greatly mellowed since his first arrival in Europe, and to have developed qualities of gravity and judgment which were not always conspicuous. Perhaps this information may be of some use to His Majesty's Government and to His Majesty's Minister in Tehran.

I have, &amp;c.

H. W. MACLEAN,

*Secretary.*

Inclosure in No. 23.

*Mr. Redfern to Messrs. Lynch Bros.*

Dear Sirs,

*Tehran, September 11, 1909.*

A MOST satisfactory report is just to hand from Mr. Satham regarding the state of the Tehran-Kuun road. He informs that the local Shahsevens are being held responsible for its safety, and that some thirty of their number, properly armed, have been detailed to patrol it, and have already proved themselves to be efficient guards.

For some time past we have been subjected to many petty annoyances at the hands of the Shahsevens at Kaleh Mahomed Ali Khan, while for months they have opposed the construction of a toll building, which had already been commenced, about 4 miles south of Alibad. Mr. Satham now reports that they have withdrawn all opposition to the completion of this building, and generally display a conciliatory spirit and a desire to be on good terms with us. It is possible that this change of tactics is to be attributed to the influence of the Sardar Assad, who recently met a few of the Shahsevan chiefs in before him.

Yours faithfully,

*(Per pro. Lynch Bros.)*

F. A. D. REIDFERN.

[1684]

P

[37452]

No. 24.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 750.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, October 10, 1909.

WITHDRAWAL of Russian troops.

There are indications in the press of an approaching recrudescence of the agitation against the Russian troops.

M. Poklewski informs me that Russian Government have decided to reduce immediately the Tabreez force by one half. It is to be hoped that this step will check the agitation.

[37622]

No. 25.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 179.)

Sir,

Gulahet, September 24, 1909.

ACCORDING to statistics supplied me by the Administrator-General of the Customs, the receipts of the custom-house at Enzeli have amounted for the five months—the 21st March to the 21st August—of the current year to 253,370 tomans, as compared with 188,743 tomans during the same five months in 1908. These figures are of special interest in view of the complaints so repeatedly made at St. Petersburg as to the interruption of traffic on the Resht-Tehran road. I notice from Mr. O'Beirne's despatch No. 146, which has reached me in the print sections, that he has been led to believe that interruption of traffic on this road has on recent occasions caused heavy losses to Russian trade. I have myself seen no signs of any interference with traffic between Resht and Tehran, and the figures now given prove conclusively that the trade which uses this route has not in any way been checked by recent events.

In striking contrast with the increase shown in the Enzeli receipts, which M. Mornard tells me is not confined to Enzeli amongst the northern custom-houses, is the alarming decrease in the Gulf customs receipts, in which the falling off during the first six months of this year has been as marked as that shown last year (see my despatch No. 20, Commercial, of the 15th instant). The total receipts at the ports in question—from the 21st March to the 21st September of the current year—amount, according to the enclosed statement furnished me by M. Mornard, to no more than 295,000 tomans, those of Bushire totalling only 160,000 tomans.

I have, &amp;c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 25.

M. Mornard to Sir G. Barclay.

M. le Ministre,

Le 18 septembre, 1909.

J'ai m'empresse de vous communiquer le relevé comparatif des recettes douanières du sud pendant les années gou'il, bitch'il, et taga-gou'il.

La décroissance est désastreuse, particulièrement en ce qui concerne le port de Bouchir. Aussi, dès que je serai en possession des renseignements statistiques pour le premier semestre de l'année courante, j'examinerai si le trafic commercial de la région méridionale n'est pas en partie déplacé et dirigé vers les frontières du nord. A ce point de vue, les thés et le sucre peuvent jouer un rôle important, d'autant plus que les thés transitent librement en Russie, par la voie de Batoum-Bacon-Ashkhabad.

Je regrette vivement d'être retenu chez moi par une indisposition et de ne pouvoir vous personnellement vous entretenir de la situation déplorable dans laquelle se trouve la région des côtes du Golfe persique.

Veuillez, &amp;c.

C. MORNARD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 25.

COMPARATIVE Statement of Customs Receipts for Southern Ports of Persia.

	Recettes brutes			Observations.
	Année gou'il, 1907-8.	Année bitch'il, 1908-9.	Pour les six premiers mois de l'année taga- gou'il, 1909-10.	
Bouchir .. ..	Kraus, 6,725,843-15	Kraus, 5,094,019-85	Kraus, 1,600,000	Les chiffres pour taga- gou'il sont approxi- matifs.
Lingah .. ..	602,298-25	456,849-50	230,000	
Bander Abbas ..	2,226,942-50	1,626,767-70	350,000	
Mohammurah ..	1,788,451-75	959,101-30	534,000	
Diakul .. ..				
Ahwaz .. ..	101,922-80	94,825-20	46,000	
Chonchter .. ..				
Totaux .. ..	11,345,458-45	8,231,565-55	2,950,000	

Téhéran, le 18 septembre, 1909.

[37469]

No. 26.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 531.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, October 2, 1909.

I CALLED on M. Isvolsky this afternoon, as he is leaving for Livadia to-morrow morning, and I enquired whether he had received any news from M. Poklewsky. His Excellency said that M. Poklewsky had not yet studied the situation on the spot sufficiently to be able to give a serious appreciation of how matters stood; and he was awaiting a report from him before finally deciding as to how far the number of Russian troops at Tabreez could be reduced. M. Isvolsky repeated to me a remark, which had been made to me also by M. Kokovtsov, that where the Russian troops were present the roads were secure and open to traffic, wishing me, I suppose, to deduce the conclusion that the contrary was the case in localities from which Russian troops were absent. I said that I trusted the reduction would soon take place, but I did not dwell on the point, as it would be useless to do so until the Russian Government had received a report from M. Poklewsky on the subject.

M. Isvolsky said that the Saad-ed-Dowleh had called upon him the other day, and had given him a dismal picture of the situation in Persia, where there were no capable men and no money. He had laughed at the idea of the Naas-ul-Mulk returning to Persia, and he had no confidence in the Medjliss being able to effect any good. As soon as the Persian Government had extorted all that was possible from the few individuals who possessed anything they would be at the end of their resources; and it was difficult to foresee how they would then be able to carry on the administration.

The views of those who have thought it safe to leave their country are apt to be tinged with some pessimism; but I do not think that M. Isvolsky views the situation in Persia in much brighter colours.

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

[37475]

No. 27.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 540.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, October 4, 1909.

THE Persian Minister brought the Saad-ed-Dowleh to see me this evening. The visit was unsolicited on my part, and the Saad-ed-Dowleh wished to impress on me that his call must be kept strictly confidential, as not even the staff of the Persian Legation knew that he was in St. Petersburg. He was so mysterious that he declined to give

me the name of the hotel at which he was staying, and requested that I should not return his visit, as he was leaving in a day or two. He was sad and gloomy. He had been, he said, poisoned when at Tehran, and his life had been saved by Dr. Lindley; he had no wish to return to office till affairs had assumed a more hopeful aspect. He anticipated that no improvement was likely to take place in Persia; there was not a single man in the Cabinet capable of mastering the situation, and there were no money and no elements which afforded any hope that the administration could be reformed. The Medjlis was composed largely of those who had participated in the first Assembly, and unless the Senate was convoked simultaneously with the Medjlis matters would go from bad to worse. The Senate might be able to do some good, but he had no confidence whatever in the Medjlis. The provinces would not obey the capital, and he saw nothing ahead but anarchy. The only hope would be a conference between Russia, Great Britain, and some leading men from Persia, who, as far as I could gather, should be selected from eminent exiles. This would not constitute intervention, but if the "conference" gave salutary advice to the Persian Government the latter would doubtless follow it. Otherwise, unless Great Britain and Russia took some decided steps, anarchy would increase until intervention became unavoidable.

The Saad-ed-Dowleh proceeded for some time with his jeremiads, which are hardly worth reporting, and he made no practical suggestion. I think that the real object of his visit was put forward at the close of the interview, when he remarked that his son or brother—I forget which—who had been Persian Minister at Washington, had been appointed Minister in London, and was still at Paris awaiting orders from the Persian Government to proceed. He feared that the Ali-es-Sultaneh might override this appointment, and procure the nomination of his son, the present Minister Resident in London.

I have, &c.  
A. NICOLSON.

[37478]

No. 28.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)*

(No. 543.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 6, 1900.*

I ASKED Mr. Sazonow to-day whether M. Poklewsky had yet given his opinion as to a reduction of the number of Russian troops in Persia. His Excellency replied that M. Poklewsky was anxious that a reduction should be made in the troops at Tabreez, and that the Russian Government were equally desirous that such a step should take place.

I said that I sincerely hoped that a considerable reduction would be made as soon as possible. There was really no necessity why so large a force should now be maintained. A reduction would produce a good impression in my country, where many were dubious as to the intentions of the Russian Government. I should like to see them convinced that they were in the wrong in their suspicions. Moreover, a reduction would materially improve the position of Russia in Persia, and we were as anxious as the Russian Government could be themselves that this should be the case. M. Sazonow replied that he expected a reduction would very shortly take place, and, indeed, there were great difficulties in the way of providing winter quarters for the present number of troops at Tabreez. I asked him why he said nothing as to the troops at Kazvin. He replied that he did not think the troops there could be reduced just at present. He did not tell me the reason; but I presume the Russian Government still anticipate possible troubles at Tehran, where they imagine the Russian Caucasian revolutionaries are the predominant factor. I propose to continue to urge the Russian Ministry to reduce the troops, so that there should be no misunderstanding as to our views on the subject.

I have, &c.  
A. NICOLSON.

[37541]

No. 29.

*Sir G. Louthier to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)*

(No. 516.)  
Sir,

*Constantinople, October 5, 1900.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Morgan, acting vice-consul at Van, reporting on the journey of the vali to the Persian frontier.

A copy of this despatch has been sent to Tehran.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOUTHER.

*Inclosure in No. 29.*

*Acting Vice-Consul Morgan to Sir G. Louthier.*

(No. 12.)  
Sir,

*Van, September 17, 1900.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on Saturday last, the 11th September, Bekir Sami Bey, Vali of Van, returned to Van from a journey through the eastern parts of the vilayet and the frontier zone.

As was stated in my telegram of the 22nd August, Bekir Bey left Van on the 14th August. He was accompanied by the nektoubji and by Nazim Bey, nazir of the public debt at Erzeroum, a prominent Young Turk, who had arrived in Van a few days previously.

In the course of his journey, the vali visited Bash-Kaleh, Gavvar, Tergavvar, Mergavvar, and went to within three hours of Sujbulak (a town to the south of Lake Urmia, and on the eastern extremity of the frontier zone). Although in the course of his journey he was in the vicinity of Urmia, he did not himself visit that town, but sent in his stead Nazim Bey, who, while there, enquired into the doings of the Young Turks sent last year into Persia to aid the Persian constitutionalists.

According to the acting Persian consul here, the object of the vali's visit was as follows:—

A large number of Persians on the frontier have been complaining to their embassy at Constantinople of the kaimakam of Chari, son-in-law of Sheikh Hamid Pasha, of Bash-Kaleh, and of the misdeeds of all the Turkish officials, civil or military, now in Persia. These officials, relying on the presence of Turkish troops in Persia and on the absence of any restraining authority, have unjustly appropriated Persian property and lands, dispossessing the Persian owners. The Minister of the Interior, finding it difficult to get at the true state of the case, ordered the vali to make a journey into the region in question, and to report on these matters, and further to report in general on the work of the Turkish officials there during the last two years.

This was probably one of the reasons of the journey.

From Nazim Bey and other sources I learnt that the vali had been instructed by the authorities at Constantinople to make the journey with a view to submitting his proposals as to the organization of Turkish civil posts in the zone. I hear that he has proposed that the district should be formed into a mutessarilik, the head-quarters to be at Shind, with subordinate kaimakamates at Kavana, Chari, and Singan, and that the mutessarifi, when appointed, should organise the gendarmierie and police. The vali has also suggested that the seat of the kaimakam of Bash-Kaleh should be transferred to Gavvar, as frontier affairs could be better administered from the latter post.

From a conversation I had with the vali I gathered that he had decided views with regard to the Persian frontier zone. He explained that, although Persia laid claim to the zone, and Persian officials had been appointed to posts there, yet Turkey had equal rights with Persia in it. Although in the past Turkey had made little protest against Persian action and rule in the zone, yet her right was none the less unshaken. The miserable condition of the natives of the zone at the present moment, due to the distracted state of Persia—a state which was likely to continue for some time—made it necessary that Turkey should act on that right. In any case the presence of Russian troops in Tabreez and neighbourhood for the purpose of protecting Russian interests was a good precedent for Turkey to follow in regard

to Turkish interests in the zone. He evidently regards the conversion of the zone into Turkish territory not only as desirable, but as of right.

In the course of his journey the vali was accompanied for three or four days by the Sheikh of Shemsdinan. The character of the sheikh has been described by Captain Dickson in his telegram of the 7th June, relating to the attack made on him. The vali, on the contrary, seems to have been very favourably impressed by him. He describes him as intelligent and tractable, and cited as a proof of his good-will towards the Government the fact that he had sent a large force of his tribesmen to help the Government troops in the vilayet of Mosul in their struggle with the Sheikh of Shemsdinan—a struggle now being carried on in the vicinity of Akra. The Sheikh of Shemsdinan no doubt realised that it was in his interest to please the vali, and as regards his help of the Government in Mosul, the fact that he is at hereditary feud with the Sheikh of Zibar may go far towards explaining his action.

The vali is leaving Van on Wednesday next for Serai, Arjish, and Adeljivas, and will return to Van by way of the western and southern portions of the lake. He wishes to inspect the subordinate posts and to make himself acquainted with his vilayet.

I have, &c.  
JAMES MORGAN.

[37502]

No. 30.

*Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)*

(No. 119.)

Sir,

*Brussels, October 8, 1909.*

THE Persian Minister mentioned to me to-day that Saad-ed-Dowleh (who is a relative of his) was on his way to London, and would like to have an interview with you, as he had some information to communicate which he believed would prove of interest to His Majesty's Government. Would I, as an old friend of his Excellency, mention this to you.

I said, I saw no objection to doing so, but asked why he had not applied to Sir George Barclay for an introduction to you. Mofakhem-es-Sultaneh replied that it had been difficult for him to have recourse to any official channel in Persia, as he had been banished, as one of the Ministers of the ex-Shah, after the deposition of that Prince.

The Saad-ed-Dowleh's character and antecedents are too well known to you for me to need to say anything further respecting him, but I may mention that although an intriguer and a political weathercock, he is an able man speaking French as fluently as Persian, and I think it quite possible that you might find it worth while to hear, or to request one of His Majesty's Under-Secretaries to do so, the communication which he wishes to make to you.

I have, &c.  
ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

[37709]

No. 31.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)*

(No. 156.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 11, 1909.*

REDUCTION of Russian forces in Persia.

I am informed by the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that the newspapers to-morrow or next day will contain an announcement to the effect that about 900 men will be withdrawn from the Russian force at Tabreez. According to M. Sazonov this is half of the Russian troops at present at that place. With regard to the reduction of the force at Kazvin I pressed his Excellency, but he could give no promise that the force there could be reduced for the present.

News had just reached the Russian Government from Ardabil that the Shah'sovana had begun again to pillage round that place.

[37809]

No. 32.

*The Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received October 12.)*

Sir,

*3, Solter's Hall Court, London, October 11, 1909.*

IN reply to your letter of the 23rd ultimo on the subject of the outstanding account for repairs to the bridges on the Bakhtiari road, I have the honour to inform you that we have telegraphed to our Tehran agent authorising him to accept payment of the principal in settlement of our claim, and to forgo any interest thereon, provided a prompt settlement be effected. My board request that it may be clearly pointed out to the chiefs that our accounts represent actual out-of-pocket expenses, and that it is entirely contrary to commercial principles that we should receive no interest on the money disbursed in this way on behalf of the chiefs. We could not carry on business on these lines. The concession we are making is tantamount to a free gift to the chiefs of more than 1000.

I have, &c.  
H. W. MACLEAN,  
Secretary.

[38046]

No. 33.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)*

(No. 751.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 14, 1909.*

WITHDRAWAL of Russian troops from Persia.

I learn privately from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez that he has been informed by his Russian colleague that winter quarters were being prepared at Kazvin for the troops, and no reduction in the force was meditated.

I informed M. Poklewski, without giving names, that information had reached me to the effect that buildings were being constructed, and I again emphasised the dangers which must attend the continued presence of troops in close vicinity of Tehran. He informed me that the decision of the Russian Government to reduce or to retain the force would not be affected by any steps the general might take with regard to the preparation of winter quarters, and that as soon as the Persian Government gave him an opportunity he would urge the reduction.

I enquired into the nature of the opportunity he awaited in order to use any influence to bring it about, and I understood that he would be satisfied if the Persian Government fully reinstated Smirnov and Sadonsky, a question which still remains unsettled, and were conciliatory in the matter of certain Crown jewels that are missing, and are said to have been sold by the uncle of the ex-Shah, Naib-es-Sultaneh, who is under Russian protection. The latter question will, he expects, be investigated very shortly, and he asked that a representative of the British Legation might be present at the enquiry. I agreed to this request, although we are not interested in the Naib (vide entry I of protocol in my despatch No. 171 of the 9th September, 1909).

M. Poklewski has not alluded to the withdrawal of the troops. When I supported it he replied that he did not think that his Government could be induced to agree to anything beyond reduction. This is to be deplored, on the ground not solely of the pretext to intrigue which the presence of any Russian force in the neighbourhood of Tehran affords, but also of the serious anti-Russian agitation which will certainly be aroused when the Medjlis opens in the course of a few weeks if the troops are still stationed at Kazvin. The withdrawal, which Russia could now effect without touching her *amour-propre*, and without exposing foreigners to any greater risk than ordinary life in Persia entails, would become difficult in the event of such agitation, whether Russian lives and property were thereby endangered or not. There are indications that the attitude of the press, although not yet hostile, is tending to become so.

[38042]

No. 34.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)*(No. 752.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.*Tehran, October 14, 1909.*

ARDEBIL.

His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez telegraphs us follows:—

"Position at Ardebil has become more serious. The leaders of Shahsevan tribes, who had submitted themselves to Sattar, will not oppose Rahim Khan, and have vacated the town. Rahim Khan is apparently also supported by a powerful Karadagh chief, Zorghan, who was supposed to act against him.

"My Russian colleague has received for transmission to His Imperial Majesty Mohammed Ali Shah, Russian Legation, a telegram from Rahim Khan, and bearing his signature with that of several Shahsevan leaders. They declare that they will not acknowledge the new régime, and that they will march on the capital after having laid waste to Ardebil. The day arranged for this move has, however, gone by, and up till now they have restricted themselves to the north-west of Ardebil and to a little plundering.

"Russian consul-general promises to reply that the addressee has left Tehran and to return the telegram.

"Mukhter-es-Sultaneh is preparing to deal with the situation, but he considers that it presents no serious danger. The force which has been sent from Tehran will be deflected to Sarub. It is at present at Zonjan, where reactionaries, headed by local high priest, have obstructed the road and stirred up disorders."

[38049]

No. 35.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)*(No. 457.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.*St. Petersburg, October 14, 1909.*

PLEASE see Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 751 and 752 of to-day's date: Russian troops in Persia.

I will see M. Sazonov to-morrow, and will urge that the force at Kazvin should be withdrawn, or at least largely reduced.

[37809]

No. 36.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*(No. 470.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.*Foreign Office, October 14, 1909.*

OUTSTANDING Godar Bridge account. Please refer to your telegram No. 734 of the 20th September.

On condition that the settlement shall be prompt, Persian Transport Company will be content with having the principal paid, and will forgo interest.

[35728]

No. 37.

*Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 14, 1909.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence respecting the state of the Godar bridge, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, for the information of your board, the accompanying copy of a memorandum, which has been received in a despatch dated the 31st August from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran on the subject.

As you will perceive, the question of repairs is one of urgency, and I am to express the hope that it may be found convenient to reach an early decision in regard to the letter addressed to you from this department on the 4th May.

I am, &c.  
LOUIS MALLET.

[38155]

No. 38.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 15.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 14, 1909.*

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 1st October, 1909, enclosing a despatch in original from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, regarding the Turco-Persian boundary question in so far as it relates to territory of the Sheikh of Mohammereh.

In reply, I am to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the instructions to Sir G. Barclay proposed by Sir E. Grey. Lord Morley agrees in the view that, desirable as it is to maintain the *status quo* as at present locally observed on the frontier, it cannot be contended that the line defined in 1850 by the mediating commissioners has been cancelled by any subsequent declaration of Great Britain and Russia, and that His Majesty's Government could not formally support the Sheikh of Mohammereh in claiming that his frontier extends beyond that line, except after communication with the Turkish and Russian Governments.

Sir G. Barclay's original despatch, with enclosures, is herewith returned.

I am, &c.  
R. RITCHIE.

[38126]

No. 39.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 15.)*

(No. 753.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 15, 1909.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 752 of the 14th October: Azerbaijani.

I am informed by Minister of Interior that disorders at Zenjan are subsiding, and that Tehran force is continuing its march northwards to Tabreez, having left Zenjan.

[38184]

No. 40.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 15.)*

(No. 458.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 15, 1909.*

PLEASE refer to my telegram No. 457 dated yesterday: Russian force on Tehran-Resht road.

I saw M. Sazonov this afternoon, and urged that the force at Kazvin should be withdrawn, or that it should at any rate be considerably reduced; but I regret to say that, although I adduced every possible argument to show that this step was advisable, I could not induce M. Sazonov to consent to do so. The Russian Government would, he assured me, act in the manner I suggested as soon as it was possible for them to do so, but at present there was no guarantee of lasting quiet, and the moment for the withdrawal had therefore not arrived. To send the troops back after they had been withdrawn would be highly undesirable. As an instance his Excellency mentioned Ardebil, the situation there had suddenly become very grave after a period of complete quiet. Some little time ago, in the Council of Ministers, it was only with great difficulty that he had succeeded in inducing the Minister of War and others of his colleagues to give up the project of a punitive expedition against the Shahsevas, who were guilty of the murder of a Russian officer and other misdeeds, and he had only managed to dissuade his colleagues from this idea by urging that calm had been restored in that district. But the situation there could not possibly be worse than it was at present, and he would in all probability be blamed for having been unduly optimistic on the subject. In these circumstances there was no prospect whatever of a reduction or withdrawal of the Kazvin force being decided on by the Russian Cabinet. I did my utmost to move M. Sazonov from his determination, and contested the validity of the arguments he used, but, as I mentioned above, in vain.

[1684]

H

[35734]

No. 41.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 142.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 15, 1909.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 171 of the 9th ultimo, enclosing copy of the protocol signed on the 7th September relative to the surrender by the ex-Sliah of the Crown jewels, and to other questions connected with his departure from Persian territory.

I approve your action in signing this protocol, and I take this opportunity of expressing to you my high appreciation of the manner in which you have conducted the wearisome negotiations connected with these questions.

I am, &amp;c.

E. GREY.

[38227]

No. 42.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 16.)*

(No. 553.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 11, 1909.*

M. SAZONOW informed me to-day that to-morrow or the day after the papers would announce the withdrawal to Russia of about 900 men from the force at Tabreez. This meant, he said, that half of the present garrison would be brought home. I told him that this was satisfactory news, and would, I trusted, have a good effect in Persia; and I enquired whether some similar reduction could not take place in the force at Kazvin. There seemed to be no necessity to retain a large force there, as all the information which I had received was that perfect tranquillity prevailed. Moreover, the Persian Government were showing a disposition to be conciliatory, as they had officially replaced the Russian preceptor and the Russian doctor in their former functions. M. Sazonow said that the moment had not yet arrived for reducing the Kazvin force; it was impossible to say with certainty what the immediate future would bring forth, and there were only 1,600 or 1,700 Russian troops at Kazvin. He hoped that what the Russian Government had decided upon in regard to the Tabreez force would be taken as a surety of their good intentions. As I saw that he was a little disappointed that I had not been entirely satisfied with the news which he had given me, I thought it would seem a little ungenerous were I to continue to press him at this moment in regard to the Kazvin garrison, and so I dropped the subject, though I will return to it in a very few days and urge reductions in the Kazvin force also.

M. Sazonow said that he had just received information that the Shahsevens had recommenced pillaging round Ardabil. I said that I did not suppose that he considered the new régime in Tehran was responsible for these misdeeds. He replied that the Shahsevens were acting on their account with no political objects—nothing beyond pure and simple brigandage. Sattar Khan was to have re-established order there, but he appeared to have been unable to effect anything. I enquired if he wished to imply that Sattar Khan had had a hand in the recrudescence of disorders. He replied that he had had no information on the subject one way or another; all he knew was that pillaging had recommenced. It was unfortunate, he added, that the Russian Government had not punished the Shahsevens in the first instance; but now it was too late in the season to take any serious measures against them.

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

P.S. October 12.—The "Official Messenger" published to-day states that "four companies of infantry, a half-company of engineers, and a battery of field artillery will be recalled from Tabreez, and that there will then remain two companies of infantry, four sections of Cossacks, one battery of mountain artillery, and a half-company of engineers." These, it states, will be recalled as soon as the Russian Government is satisfied that permanent order has been re-established.

A. N.

[38555]

No. 43.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 18.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 16, 1909.*

I AM directed by Viscount Morley to enclose, for the information of Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of a Secret letter from the Government of India, enclosing the receipt of the Sheikh of Mohammerah for the sum of 10,000, advanced to him by His Majesty's Government in connection with the agreement recently concluded between the sheikh and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

I am, &amp;c.

R. RITCHIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 43.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Secret.)

My Lord,

*Simla, September 23, 1909.*

WE have the honour to forward herewith a copy of a letter from the political resident in the Persian Gulf, enclosing the receipt of the Sheikh of Mohammerah for the sum of 10,000, advanced to him by His Majesty's Government in connection with the agreement recently concluded between the sheikh and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

2. The receipt appears to us to be in order, and the political resident has been informed accordingly.

We have, &amp;c.

MINTO.

O'M. CREAGH.

J. O. MILLER.

W. L. HARVEY.

G. F. WILSON.

S. P. SINHA.

H. H. RISLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 43.

*Major Cox to Government of India.**Bushire, August 21, 1909.*

IN amplification of my telegram of the 17th instant, I have the honour to attach copies of the communications in which His Majesty's acting consul, Mohammerah, reports the due endorsement by the tribal elders of the agreement come to between the Sheikh of Mohammerah and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and the paying over of the amount of the loan made to the sheikh by Government (10,000), and the ten years' rental in advance (6,500) by the oil company.

The sheikh's receipt for the 10,000, is forwarded in original, with translation, a copy being recorded in my archives. I trust that it will be considered in order.

A copy of this communication is being forwarded to His Majesty's Minister via London.

Inclosure 3 in No. 43.

*Lieutenant Wilson to Major Cox.*

(Confidential.)

*Mohammerah, July 31, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the agreement between Sheikh Khazal and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (Limited) was duly signed in the presence of myself and Mr. C. A. Wahole, of Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co., on the 30th instant at Fadiyeh, by headmen Haji Faisal, Haji Arak, Haji Athib, Haji Fazl, Haji Abdus Sayyid, Haji Muhammad Chaman, Abdulla-bin-Salauk, who affixed their seals to the copy of the agreement in the possession of Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co.

2. I further attested their signatures by signing below as follows:—

"Witness to the signature of the above seven headmen, the 30th July, 1909:

"A. T. WILSON, Lieutenant, I.A."

## Inclosure 4 in No. 43.

Lieutenant Wilson to Major Cox.

Mohammerah, August 14, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 10th instant Hajji Mushir, son of Hajji Tuis, opened the boxes of gold, aggregating 16,500*l.*, in my possession for delivery to the sheikh, 6,500*l.* of which had been frauded over by Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co. to me at the sheikh's special request, to hand to him under secret arrangements.

2. Hajji Mushir counted two bags, weighed the rest, found all correct, replaced the bags in the boxes, sealed the boxes with his own seal, and left them with me till the evening, when he and his father dined with me, and after dinner took away the boxes, explaining to the boatmen that they must tell no one, as the boxes contained cartridges.

3. At the same time Hajji Rais handed me the sheikh's receipt for Lloyd, Scott, and Co.'s 6,500*l.*, and a separate receipt for the loan of 10,000*l.* I enclose the latter; the former I have handed over to Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co., with a true copy.

I have not kept a copy of the enclosed receipt of the sheikh.

4. On the 11th instant I went to Faiilyeh, showed his Excellency the receipt for 6,500*l.*, which bore his seal and signature, and asked him *pro forma* whether it was his seal and his signature, to which he answered in the affirmative. I then asked him to sign and seal the statement (added below the document drawn up by you) to the effect that he had actually received the money, and he did this in my presence.

5. I expressed a hope that he would now at once pay back the sum borrowed from the Germans, and he said he would do so.

I further asked him for a copy of the "firman." He replied that he would let me have it after Kuzman, when the slave woman returned.

6. I have this day handed to Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co. a receipt for the 10,000*l.*, of which I attach a copy.

Received the sum of (10,000*l.*) ten thousand pounds sterling in English sovereigns, per steamship "Kasara," from the Banque Nationale d'Escompte de Paris.

Mohammerah, August 13, 1909.

A. T. WILSON, Lieutenant,  
His Britannic Majesty's Consul.

## Inclosure 5 in No. 43.

Sheikh Khazal Khan, Sheikh of Mohammerah, to Major Cox.

(Translation.)

20th Rajab, 1327 (August 7, 1908).

I HAVE the honour to state, with reference to the loan of 10,000*l.*, about which your honour wrote to me on the 16th June to the effect that the British Government are pleased to pay it in accordance with my request.

I now beg to inform you, in corroboration of what has passed between us in the course of conversation, that I can accept responsibility for liquidation of the amount on behalf of myself and my heirs.

It will suit me best to pay 6 per cent. interest by an annual instalment on the 20th Rajab of every year, the first payment to be made on the 20th Rajab, 1328.

I also desire to pay the original amount at the rate of 1,000*l.* per annum simultaneously with the interest, but as regards the instalments of the original amount above referred to, I shall be glad if I am given the option to put off the annual instalment of 1,000*l.* in any particular year when the state of affairs makes it difficult for me to make the payment. It should be understood, however, that this will not relieve me from the obligation to refund the whole loan within ten years.

I shall be obliged if the consul, Mohammerah, can be authorised to give me regularly a month's notice prior to the date when the payment falls due.

Interest should run on the loan from the date when the consul, Mohammerah, pays me the same against my receipt. The refund of instalments is to be made in this way,

that is, the amount due will be paid in English pounds or rupees or by drafts on well-known banks against his receipt.

Dated the 20th Rajab, 1327 (7th August, 1909).

KHAZAAL-BIN-JABER.

(L.S.)

KHAZAAL.

The above sum of 10,000*l.* was received by me this day, the 20th Rajab, 1327 (7th August, 1909), through His Britannic Majesty's consul at Mohammerah.

KHAZAAL-BIN-JABER.

(L.S.)

KHAZAAL.

[38401]

No. 44.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 18.)

(No. 754.)

(Telegraphic.) *En clair.*

Tehran, October 18, 1909.

I LEARN that two companies of infantry and one grenadier battery left Tabreez for Russia 16th October.

[37075]

No. 45.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

(No. 471.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, October 20, 1909.

PROPOSED convocation of Persian Senate.

Acting on instructions received from St. Petersburg, Count Benckendorff has suggested to me that the two Governments should instruct their representatives at Tehran to endeavour to secure the summoning of a Senate in Persia which might constitute a check on the powers of the Medjliss. I told Count Benckendorff that it seemed to me, although I had not studied the question carefully, that we should appear to be interfering beyond what was necessary in Persian internal affairs if we proceeded to such a step.

Please let me know by the next messenger what you think of the proposal.

[38865]

No. 46.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 21.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Government of India, dated the 19th October, relative to the Shiraz escort.

India Office, October 20, 1909.

Inclosure in No. 46.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

October 19, 1909.

PLEASE refer to your telegram of the 29th September.

View of His Majesty's Minister at Tehran that Shiraz escort should be maintained at its present strength until the end of next year has our concurrence. It is presumed that home and Indian revenues will bear the cost of the increased escort in equal shares.

[38894]

No. 47.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)*

(No. 755.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 21, 1909.*

PERSIAN Government have satisfied M. Poklewski in the matter of Smirnow and Sadowsky, both of whom have been reinstated. The former is, I understand, to attend at the Palace five days a-week to give tuition to the Shah.

(Very Confidential.)

The Persian Government have unfortunately now given a fresh cause of complaint by the appointment to Berlin of Elhtesham-es-Sultaneh as Minister.

M. Poklewski informs me that this appointment violates an undertaking which the Russian Legation received last year. I presume this undertaking was given at the moment of M. de Hartig's representations to the Shah regarding interview granted at Elhtesham to journalist in Berlin (see Mr. Marling's despatch No. 225 of the 20th August, 1908).

[37502]

No. 48.

*Sir Edward Grey to Karl Graunke.*

(No. 61.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 21, 1909.*

I HAVE received Sir A. Harding's despatch No. 119 of the 8th instant, respecting the desire of the Saad-ed-Dowleh to have an interview with me. I request you to cause the Saad-ed-Dowleh to be informed that I shall be happy to give him a personal interview, if the Persian Minister at this Court wishes to introduce him to me. If he desires to come quite unofficially to the Foreign Office, one of the Under-Secretaries of State will be glad to receive him.

I am, &amp;c.

E. GREY.

[37075]

No. 49.

*Sir Edward Grey to Russian Chargé d'Affaires.*

THE Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, and, with reference to the memorandum which Count Benckendorff left at the Foreign Office on the 5th instant on the desirability of convoking the Persian Senate to counterbalance the influence of the assembly, and suggesting that the Russian and British Ministers at Tehran should be furnished with instructions on the subject, has the honour to state that at first sight any action by the two Powers in this matter would appear to constitute an undesirable interference in the purely internal affairs of Persia. In deference, however, to the suggestion of the Russian Government, Sir Edward Grey has instructed His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to furnish him with a report on the subject.

*Foreign Office, October 21, 1909.*

[39120]

No. 50.

*Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received October 23.)*

Sir,

*Board of Trade, October 22, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th October, forwarding copy of a letter from the Indo-European Telegraph Company, Limited, with reference to a proposal for improving the communications between Bunder Abbas and Kerman.

In reply, I am to state that all the gentlemen mentioned, except Mr. H. F. B. Lynch, M.P., are directors of the Indo-European Telegraph Company; Mr. J. Herbert Tritton is also a director of Messrs. Barclay and Co., Limited, bankers. Mr. Lynch is a member of the well-known firm of Messrs. Lynch Brothers. The Board are accordingly of

opinion that there can be no doubt that for the purpose in question an adequate guarantee of financial respectability is afforded by the names of these gentlemen.

I am, &amp;c.

WALTER J. HOWELL.

[39138]

No. 51.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 23.)*

(No. 756.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 23, 1909.*

ARDEHIL. With reference to my telegram No. 752 of the 14th October, I have received the following from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez:—

Shahsevan and Karadaghis tribesmen are investing Ardebil, and for several days fighting has been continued. It is difficult to obtain information as telegraph wires have been cut, but Sattar Khan appears to be hard pressed, and Mukhber-es-Sultaneh has given orders for a thousand horsemen to proceed without delay to Sarab under Samad Khan.

It is expected that 200 Manloo horsemen will arrive here to-morrow, an equal number of Persian Cossacks with four guns reached Tabreez to-day, the remainder of the troops sent from Tehran appear to be still in Zeuzan, where reactionaries have been crushed by the Governor. An expedition is being formed for the relief of Ardehil, and a camp organised outside Tabreez.

(Confidential.)

I have been informed privately by the governor-general that a catastrophe cannot be avoided if the Russians do not cease from giving encouragement to Rahim Khan and to the Shahsevan chiefs. I used very guarded language to Russian consul-general, who appeared to be somewhat afraid of a rebuke. Situation might be helped if he received instructions from M. Poklewski to warn rebels clearly that Russia views their action with disfavour.

Unless these powerful tribes are made to understand that their rebellion is not countenanced by Russia, the position may become such as again to necessitate intervention.

M. Poklewski, to whom I read a portion of this telegram, informs me that Russian consul-general at Tabreez has been instructed to warn Rahim Khan that Russian Government will hold him responsible for disorders.

[39139]

No. 52.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 24.)*

(No. 757.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 24, 1909.*

ARDEHIL. My telegram No. 756 of the 23rd October.

I am informed by M. Poklewski that Russian consul at Ardehil has applied to His Government for a force to protect the lives and property of Russian subjects there.

Every effort is being made by the Persian Government to cope with the situation; 450 men are being sent from Tehran with two guns.

[39140]

No. 53.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 24.)*

(No. 758.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 24, 1909.*

NAVIGATION of Lake Urumia.

With reference to my telegram No. 715 of the 1st October, I am informed by His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez that negotiations are being carried on by a party of Persian merchants, who, there is reason to believe, are relying on German support, with a view to obtaining the concession for the roads around Urumia and for the navigation of the lake. Project has, it is reported, received the approval of Sardar Assal, and Taki Zade has promised to support it when it is brought before the Medjliss.



The Persians interested in the matter can count on the active sympathy of this body, for they have supported the cause of the Constitution financially.

At Tahreez two Germans have already arrived, and more are expected. The two here are engineers with other German commercial connections, and apparently brought with them design of a steamer which, however, they lost on the road.

Innam Kuli's concession is stated by merchants, I do not know upon what grounds, to be valueless, but German consular agent has left for Soujboulak, and his visit is doubtless for the purpose of treating on behalf of the Persian combine with the concessionaire.

M. Poklewski is sending instructions to Russian consuls to communicate this new move to the Russians at present negotiating at Soujboulak, and it will, it is hoped, wake them and Innam Kuli to the necessity for a prompt settlement. M. Poklewski is of opinion that Russian Road Company's concession could be interpreted as sufficient to bar any concession with German backing for lake navigation, but Russian position would be greatly strengthened if they could participate in Innam Kuli's enterprise.

[39186]

No. 54.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 174.)

Sir,

*Gulahak, September 18, 1909.*

WITH reference to article 4 of the protocol enclosed in my despatch No. 171 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that a convention has now been concluded between the Persian Government and the Russian bank for the taking over by the former of the ex-Shah's personal debt to the bank. The debt, which is to carry interest at 6 per cent., is to be paid off within ten years, and is secured on the northern customs receipts.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

[39192]

No. 55.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 180.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 29, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's consul-general at Bushire in regard to the assumption by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the Arabian telegraph lines.

I enclose at the same time copy of the reply which I have addressed to Captain Trevor.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 55.

*Major Cox to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 64.)

Sir,

*Bushire, July 29, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward, for your information and such action as you may consider possible, a copy of a letter addressed to me by Lieutenant A. T. Wilson, in which, in connection with the contemplated assumption by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the Arabian telegraph lines, he submits certain views and suggestions.

From the practical point of view Lieutenant Wilson's recommendations appear to me to be to the point, and generally have my support.

Especially, it would be a great convenience, both practically and politically, if the arrangement advocated in paragraph 8 of his letter could be unhesitatingly brought about during the course of the present measures for the transfer of the control of the lines, and provided that the necessary measure of control of the Persian office

remained with the sheikh, as at present, I think we might depend on his tacit co-operation in arranging the location of the English office to suit us.

I have, &c.

*P. Z. COX, Major, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General for Persia, &c.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 55.

*Lieutenant A. T. Wilson to Major Cox.*

Sir,

*Mohammerah, July 3, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to address you on the subject of the assumption by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the control of the Arabian telegraph lines, a step which has, I understand, received the final sanction of the Government.

2. I venture to suggest that the department should be moved to make a start with as little delay as possible, as not only are local political circumstances propitious, but the rapid growth of British telegraph service more necessary than ever.

3. It would be convenient if the Indo-European Telegraph Department could make some statement as to their future policy with regard to the existing lines, offices, and operators, for the information of this consulate and of the British firms chiefly concerned.

4. As regards control of the lines, I venture to suggest that before the line is renewed on iron poles, the working of the existing lines and of the telegraph offices should be taken over as soon as possible by the department.

5. It would be well if the reconstruction of the (1) Ahwaz-Mohammerah line (2) Ahwaz-Borajun line could take precedence over the remainder of the system, as the Duffell-Shushtar-Ahwaz line affects British interests but little. I have already recommended the relaying of the Mohammerah-Ahwaz line down the left bank of the Karun.

6. As regards operators, I would point out that only one telegraph office in Arabistan (*i.e.*, at Ahwaz) is at present officially open for messages in European languages, and that although such messages can usually be sent from Mohammerah to Ahwaz, they cannot be sent elsewhere, as the telegraph clerk at this place, for the above reason, refuses to transmit them.

Such telegrams, therefore, if destined for (*e.g.*) Bushire, Tehran, or London, must be sent from Mohammerah to an agent in Ahwaz and readdressed from there, involving a double payment of part of the charge.

7. It is greatly to be desired that the telegraph office at Mohammerah should be at once officially authorized to accept messages in European languages for transmission over the Ahwaz-Borajun line. A recommendation to this effect has already been submitted to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran by Mr. McDouall.

8. As regards the provision of telegraph offices at Mohammerah, I would point out that the present Persian office is 2 miles from the consulate, around which are grouped the customs office, Messrs. Lynch Brothers' warehouses, Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Company's offices, and the Waukhams agency. The provision in the British Consulate of a separate telegraph office for messages in European languages (Persian messages being sent, as now, from the town office) would be a great convenience to users of the wire, and, if undertaken now, would probably meet with no opposition.

It would also be desirable on other grounds into which I need not enter.

9. There is at the present moment room in the consulate for a telegraph office, and, should this proposal meet with your approval, I am ready to submit a detailed plan of the consulate, and of the relative position of the town office, consulate, &c.

Such a proposal, of course, involves two operators, one for English and the other for Persian work, but a saving of cost might be effected by converting the present British post office into a postal telegraph office, with a trained telegraphist as postmaster.

The provision of a separate office for European messages would leave the Persian office, as now, to some extent under the control of the sheikh, a state of things which I consider desirable at present. The sheikh could then, as now, keep himself informed of the purport of all messages in Persian passing over the wire, though not of the English messages. This is a matter upon which he would, I believe, if approached, lay great stress, as it gives him a sense of security against plotters, and enables him to

control, in the same way as Persian governors elsewhere, a channel of communication between his subjects in various parts of Arabistan which might easily be used against him.

I have, &c.

A. T. WILSON, Indian Army.

Inlosure 3 in No. 55.

*Copy of a demi-official letter, dated the 23rd April, 1909, from Lieutenant A. T. Wilson, Indian Army, to Mr. J. C. Smith, Indo-European Telegraph Department.*

I GIVE below, for your information, my reasons for thinking the east bank of the Karun preferable to the west bank for a telegraph wire to Mohammerah.

1. *Distance.*—I think that it will be found that there is nothing to choose in this respect between the east or the west bank, but the east bank may have a slight advantage.

2. *Facility for inspection.*—The east bank is practically always passable to horsemen, even when the west bank is flooded in places.

3. *Security.*—The east bank is always perfectly safe; the west bank less so, owing to the fear of the Bhai Turuf and Hawuzian people. It is doubtless on this account that the present wire hugs the bank all along instead of taking a straight line across country. If the latter course were adopted on the east bank several miles would be saved.

4. *Economy.*—A proposal, regarding which you will no doubt hear from Mr. Reynolds of the C.S.L. in due course, has been made that the C.S.L. should have the use of one or two wires between Nasiri and Mohammerah, and pay the Indo-European Telegraph Department a moiety of the cost of installation as well as of the upkeep. This would only be possible if the line went down the east bank. If the east bank were adopted, it would be necessary to carry the wire across the river not at Ahwaz but near Mohammerah. I should say that a 300-yards span would suffice, as long as the poles were high enough for the wires to clear the masts of the "Malamir" and "Musrat."

Inlosure 4 in No. 55.

*Sir G. Barclay to Acting Consul-General Trevel.*

(No. 19.)

Sir,

*Tehran, September 28, 1909.*

I HAVE received Major Cox's despatch No. 64 of the 29th July last enclosing a despatch from Lieutenant Wilson, in which he makes certain proposals in connection with the assumption by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the Arabian telegraph lines.

The arrangement concluded between the late Government and the department has not yet received the final sanction of the Persian Government, and requires the ratification of the Assembly before it can come into force.

In the event of the Assembly's ratifying the arrangement, Lieutenant Wilson's suggestions will be considered by the department, but at present Mr. Barker, to whom I have submitted Mr. Wilson's despatch, is of opinion that it is premature to make any comments.

I am, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

[39194]

No. 56.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received October 25.)

(No. 182.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 1, 1909.*

WITH reference to the final paragraph of Captain Lorimer's telegram of the 10th March, repeated to you in my telegram No. 149 of the 14th March last, I have the honour to transmit copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Ahwaz, reporting that Sardar Muhtasham, the Bakhtiari khan, has again asked for British

protection. Lieutenant Ranking, in like manner with Captain Lorimer on the previous occasion, merely replied that he would take note of the request.

Lieutenant Ranking observes that the Bakhtiari chiefs are losing their former trust in the British Government, and suggests that assurances of our friendly interest should be given to Sardar Muhtasham and other khans.

I concur in Lieutenant Ranking's suggestion, and shall take an opportunity of privately reminding Sardar Assad, as well as Sardar Muhtasham, who is now in Tehran, of the expression of friendly sympathy conveyed to them last year in accordance with the instructions contained in your despatch No. 136 of the 31st July, 1908.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inlosure in No. 56.

*Consul Ranking to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 143/25. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Camp Isfahan, September 8, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to recall to your Excellency's recollection the last paragraph of this office telegram No. 8/14 of the 9th March, 1909, in which Captain Lorimer said that the Sardar Muhtasham has approached him privately with a request for a guarantee of the safety of his own person and property by the British Government, to which he replied that the request was taken note of. Captain Lorimer further informed the Sardar Muhtasham that he would mention his request to me, which he did.

During my recent tour in the Bakhtiari country, while at Ardal, the Sardar Muhtasham at a private interview reiterated his request, and expressed himself as entertaining the most friendly feelings towards the British Government.

This appearing to be a favourable opportunity both for putting the sincerity of his expressions to the test and also possibly of gaining a point, I told him that deeds, not words, were a better criterion of the sincerity of a man's feelings. After some academic discussion on the subject, the Sardar Muhtasham asked in what way he could show his good-will, to which I replied pointing out various claims which up to the present remained unsatisfied.

After further discussion on the subject of the claims and of the causes which give rise to them, &c., the Sardar Muhtasham agreed to give a letter saying that he was willing to pay his share on account of the Quala Madrasa robbery and Captain Lorimer's effects stolen, if the Sansum would pay his share.

As regards his request for protection, I said that I noted and would not forget it.

I would beg to express to your Excellency my satisfaction with regard to his recent behaviour in the matter of the claims. Further, the transference of the payment of the guards to the oil company was, I understand, due in a great measure to the friendly attitude which he took up with regard to the change.

It is, of course, impossible to give him any such guarantee in the form that he asks for, but, in my humble opinion, it would be of the utmost value if he could be given some assurance of our friendly interest in his welfare.

The Sardar Muhtasham is at present, I think, sincere in his good-will towards British interests, and, more so than the other Bakhtiari khans, still looks on the British Government as his real friends. Such being the case, if it were possible by some such assurance of friendly interest to confirm him in this belief, if by any turn of events there were to be a resurgence of the adverse conditions, such as prevailed in 1907 owing to intertribal troubles, he would be the more ready to act, as, for example, he did at Khana in the interests of the British interests involved. The value of the Sardar's good feeling towards British interests is demonstrated by the incident of the above-mentioned claims. When once he agreed to pay, it made it possible to play off the Sansum and other members of his family.

A like analogy might apply to other and more important matters in which his friendliness would be of service to us.

Further, with the present bad feeling which exists between the Bakhtiari and the Sheikh of Mohammerah, in consideration of the friendly relations which exist between the British Government and the sheikh, the Sardar Muhtasham's influence, and through him that of the Haji Inan Kuli family, might be used with restraining effect on the others, if affairs were to take a serious turn. Moreover, in giving this assurance we are

not committing ourselves to anything either very definite or very extensive, whereas it may have the desired effect.

It may not be out of place to lay before your Excellency some observations, indirectly connected with the subject above discussed, on the feeling of the Bakhtiari chiefs as a whole towards the British Government.

From various interviews I have had with them, as well as from other sources, I have come to know that they, as a whole, at present are friendly, but that they regard the British Government as having given up to a great extent the former great interest, which was felt in them. Considering the importance of British interests in and approximate to their country, it must but react to our disadvantage if this idea gains ground in their minds. Moreover, since last year they have come to know that their country lies in the neutral zone, and not, as they have believed heretofore, in the zone of British interest.

All this tends to the alienation of that feeling which we most desire to foster in their minds—that the British Government is the one whom they must look upon as their best friend and the one to be “kept in with.” Owing to the long-outstanding friendship which has existed since 1841, when Layard lived among them, until lately, their natural feelings would lead them to look upon the British Government in this light, but of late years, especially since overtures were made to them about raising and arming what might be called a tribal militia, which has since come to nothing, the idea has been slowly gaining ground with them that we have lost interest in them.

In conclusion, to sum up:—

1. The Sardar Muhtasham has asked to be taken under British protection.
2. The Bakhtiari khans, from various causes, are losing their former trust in the British Government, as being the friends to whom they should turn.
3. In my humble opinion, if the growth of this feeling is not arrested, and that soon, the Bakhtiari chiefs may cast about for other friends and so gradually become alienated from us, after nearly a century of friendly relations, just at a time when British enterprise is commencing to get a firm footing in their territories.

To remedy this I would beg to lay before your Excellency a suggestion, which, if considered expedient, might meet the requirements of the present case; that, as the chiefs are in Tehran, some such assurance, as mentioned on p. 2, be given privately to the Sardar Muhtasham, and on some suitable occasion presenting itself a more general expression of our sympathy and good-will be extended to both the Haji Imam Kuli and the Hussein Kuli families.

I have, &c.

L. RANKING, Lieutenant, I.A.

[39195]

No. 57.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received October 25.)

(No. 183.)

Sir,

Tehran, October 1, 1909

WITH reference to my telegram No. 684 of the 23rd August last, reporting the dispatch of three expeditions of Russian troops from Tabreez, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's acting consul-general reporting the return of the troops to that town.

It will be observed that the detachment sent with the member of the Russian consulate-general to obtain a settlement of claims against Rahim Khan met with a considerable measure of success.

It is of interest to note that, in Mr. Smart's opinion, the initiative in dispatching the troops in question was taken by his Russian colleague, M. Miller.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 57.

*Acting Consul-General Smart to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 30.)

Sir,

Tabreez, September 19, 1909.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 182 of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to report that all three detachments of Russian troops have returned from Karadagh.

M. Beliaeff, acting secretary of the Russian consulate-general, who accompanied one detachment to Ahaz, succeeded in extracting from Rahim Khan 180 camels and £7,200 on account of Russian claims. Some display of force was necessary to persuade Rahim Khan to disgorge, and the troops surrounded his house. This gave rise to the erroneous report that the Russians had made him a prisoner.

Rahim Khan, although he has a strong and efficient force at his disposal, is very nervous as to his future, and he told M. Beliaeff that he had transported all his effects close to the Russian frontier. He also said that he had a Russian nomadic passport, i.e., a passport granted to nomad frontier tribesmen, who, by special arrangement between the two Governments, are considered as Russian subjects when in Russian territory and Persian subjects when in Persia. I was under the impression that such nomadic passports were granted in Azerbaijan, but, in any case, Rahim Khan has taken a long time to discover his passport.

The governor-general is preparing to crush Rahim Khan, and he has confidentially communicated to me his plan of campaign. He proposes to send Jhal-ul-Mulk as governor to Ahaz with a force under Bigher Khan. If Rahim Khan refuses to submit, Sattar, after carrying out his mission of disarming the population at Ardebil, is to march on Ahaz from the east. Help is also expected from Zerglani, a powerful Karadagh chief, and the Shahsevan, one tribe of whom has already made its submission to Sattar, who is now forming a camp outside Ardebil. No doubt Rahim Khan, aware of his danger, hopes to secure some sort of Russian protection.

M. Beliaeff was shown by a merchant at Ahaz carpets purporting to be those robbed from Messrs. Castelli (see Mr. Wratishaw's despatch No. 1 of the 5th January last).

It is to be feared that the action of the Russians will have unfortunate results for the inhabitants of Ahaz, from whom Rahim Khan will probably extort the equivalent of what he was forced to pay to the Russians.

The detachment of Russian troops sent to Sarab proceeded as far as Ardebil and escorted back to Tabreez a large caravan of piece-goods, which had been held up for a long time owing to the insecurity of the road.

The Meslaper detachment had an unfortunate encounter with Ali Khan, the chief who had been pillaging the villages belonging to Tounminz, a Russian subject. According to the Russian account, the soldiers were fired upon as they approached the village where Ali Khan had his quarters. They returned the fire, and killed the daughter and two followers of Ali Khan, besides wounding his brother. Ali Khan escaped and sent a detailed account to the governor-general, in which he declared that the Russians had made an unprovoked attack on him. Shortly afterwards, Ali Khan rather mysteriously died, according to the Russian account, from apoplexy; according to the Persians, from a wound received in the encounter. The local authorities are pressing for an enquiry, and demand that a representative of the Russian consulate-general be sent with a mission of the Karguzari to make an investigation on the spot. M. Miller has reluctantly agreed to send a representative when the secretary of the consulate-general arrives. As the titulaire of the post is not returning to Tabreez, and his successor is not likely to be appointed for a long time, the enquiry may be deferred to the Greek envoys.

It is difficult to believe that the objects of the expedition were merely those avowed or accomplished. Possibly it was intended as a demonstration against the Shahsevan, whose big game has been very active this year. No doubt also the Russians thought that a show of military force among the turbulent tribesmen of those parts would increase their respect for Russia and discourage them from their aggressive tactics on the frontier.

In conclusion, I think that my Russian colleague alone was responsible for the expedition. The military authorities, when first approached on the subject, were averse to dispatching troops so far from their base. M. Miller's evident anxiety during the absence of the troops, and his fear that he might be censured if any serious complications were to arise, seem to prove that he was the originator of the scheme. I did not

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conceal from him my disapproval of the expedition, and expressed the earnest hope that Russian troops would not be used for such purposes in future.

I have, &c.  
W. A. SMART.

[39196]

No. 58.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey. (Received October 25.)*

(No. 184.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, October 1, 1909.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 424 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to state that I have now received a copy of Major Cox's despatch No. 7, Commercial, of the 18th July last, and I transmit to you herewith copy of a note which I have addressed to the Persian Government on the subject of the insecurity of the southern roads and the levy of illegal exactions by the tribesmen, especially on the Bushire-Shiraz route.

I spoke to Sardar Assad, Minister of the Interior, the other day in the sense of this note, and he told me he was engaged in preparing a scheme of road guards which he felt confident would restore order on the roads. He promised to acquaint me in due course with the details.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

Enclosure in No. 58.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sardar Assad.*

Excellency,

*Gulabeh, September 23, 1909.*

BY order of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I have the honour to draw the serious attention of the Persian Government to the deplorable condition of the trade routes in Southern Persia, and more especially to that between Bushire and Shiraz. This latter route has been lately almost entirely closed to commerce owing to disturbances, robberies, and illegal exactions. A reference to the Bushire customs statistics of the first five months of the current year will show what disastrous results this state of things has had for the Persian treasury, but I am principally concerned now with its effect on British interests, and it is my duty to impress on the Persian Government that the losses incurred by British commerce owing to the failure of the Persian Government to maintain order on the roads in the south are a matter of grave concern to His Majesty's Government. I am to urge upon you the necessity of taking the necessary steps to render these routes secure, and in particular I am to insist on the suppression of the illegal exactions on the roads in accordance with article 4 of the Anglo-Persian commercial convention of 1903.

Apart from the robberies to which goods are subjected when passing along the Shiraz-Bushire route, the accompanying statement of illegal dues\* levied between Bushire and Kazerun will show your Excellency that they amount, over a distance of no more than 100 miles, to a sum of 15 krans per mule load, or over 100 krans per ton. I am to insist on the removal of this heavy and illegal burden from which British trade is the chief sufferer, without delay.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

[39197]

No. 59.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey. (Received October 25.)*

(No. 185. Confidential.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, October 4, 1909.*

I HAVE received from Lieutenant Ranking the translation, copy of which I have the honour to enclose herewith, of a secret agreement signed by the chiefs of the Bakhtiari families at Mahmir in April last and ratified by them in June at Dastana.

\* List of rahlari charges (enclosed in Major Cox's No. 7, Commercial, July 18, 1909, to Sir E. Grey).

This document, the original of which Mr. Ranking has seen, is suitably patriotic in its professions for the liberation of Persia, but leaves little doubt of the narrower, though no less fervent, aspirations of the khans for the greater glory of their tribes.

It cannot be said that, so far, circumstances have allowed of a thorough application of the terms of the agreement; but, nevertheless, the agreement is interesting as a record of the calculations of the khans at a time when the success of their enterprise was in doubt.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

Enclosure in No. 59.

*Agreement between Haji Ali Kuli Khan and the family of Hussein Kuli Khan and the family of Iwan Kuli Khan. Signed at Malamir on the 11th Rabi-ul-Anwal, 1327 (April 8, 1909).*

(Translation.)

*Preamble.*—This agreement is made between the Samsan-es-Sultaneh Sardar-es-Zafar, and Salar Heshmet on the one hand, and the Sardar Muhtesham and Salar Ashraf on the other, with a view to promoting the national movement, strengthening the constitutional cause, and promoting good feeling between the above-mentioned families in accordance with the undermentioned conditions.

*Clause 1.*—The Zorghan-es-Sultaneh shall in no way whatsoever have any active say in the affairs of the two above-mentioned families; he shall have no part or say in this agreement, and shall have no part in the partnership or rapprochement which exists between us (the undersigned); and, moreover, shall have nothing to say to either of the above-mentioned two families.

*Clause 2.*—Whatever distinctions or benefits may be obtained by us from either the "Dault" or the "Millat" shall be divided equally between the above-mentioned chiefs.

*Clause 3.*—Whatever income is obtained from the Bakhtiari or the Chahar Mahal or Isfahan, both from the city itself and from outside the city, shall be equally divided between the two contracting parties (with the exception that Ferah shall not be considered as coming within the purview of this clause), i.e., one-half to the Sardar Muhtesham and Salar Ashraf, and one-half to the brothers of the other family.

*Clause 4.*—Whatever taxes and income the Samsan-es-Sultaneh may have obtained from Isfahan shall, after the deduction of necessary expenses and daily allowance of sowars, and after these expenses are agreed upon as being correct by the members of both families, be equally divided between the two families.

*Clause 5.*—All guns, stores, and everything else which have been extracted from the store and taken from surulazes shall either be divided equally between both families or returned to store.

*Clause 6.*—Whatever the family of Hussein Kuli Khan may have obtained from the Ibbal-ed-Dowleh, the Samsan shall give a true and detailed account of the same, and shall give a half-share to Sardar Muhtesham and Salar Ashraf.

*Clause 7.*—If any one, whoever it may be, grant or award shall rebel against authority or turn "Yaghi," the Sardar Assad and Salar Ashraf shall go into the matter and inflict punishment, further, all the other (chiefs) shall accept their decision, and have no right in any way shield the offender.

*Clause 8.*—If the constitutional Government is established, and the members of the Hussein Kuli Khan family obtain any Government posts, further if the said new Government shall wish to remove the Sardar Muhtesham and the Salar Ashraf from the administration of the Bakhtiari and the Chahar Mahal, and should wish to give the said administration to the members of one family, having dispossessed the other, those in office shall not accept, except on the condition that the said administration is equally divided.

*Clause 9.*—If the Samsan-es-Sultaneh and the Sardar-uz-Zafar, as in years past, try to oppress or behave in a manner hostile to the Sardar Muhtesham and the Salar Ashraf, I, Haji Ali Kuli Khan and family, swear that we will not allow it, and as long as we are alive will assist the Sardar Muhtesham and the Salar Ashraf.

*Clause 10.*—The horses, rifles, &c., of any of the Amir Muftakham or the Salar-i-Jang's dependents who may return to the Bakhtiari country shall be the property of the Sardar Muhtesham.

All the above clauses, which we have caused to be written in the back of the Koran, and which are signed by the Ulama, we, the undersigned, will keep and as long as we are alive we will work together for the advancement of the national cause till we obtain our object.

11th *Rabbi-ul-Awwal*, 1327 (April 3, 1909).

(In Ifaji Ali Kuli Khan's writing) :—

I call God to witness and swear by the Koran that as long as I have life I will assist the Sardar Muhtesham and this Salar Ashraf, and will not break any of the above clauses.

11th *Rabbi-ul-Awwal*, 1327 (April 3, 1909).

ALI KULI.

#### *Subsidiary Agreement.*

I, Sardar Bahadur, acting on behalf of Ifaji Ali Kuli Khan and his brothers, do swear that the former agreement is still in force.

As the Sardar Muhtesham, on account of his illness and other causes, was not able to come to Haji Ali Kuli Khan, and being afraid that the latter might think that he had changed his mind, thank God being well again, he has come here to carry out his promise.

Haji Ali Kuli Khan and his brothers do swear that as long as they are alive they will assist the Sardar Muhtesham and the Salar Ashraf, and that if any of Haji Ali Kuli's family, or even Khusro Khan, should try to act in contravention of these agreements, Haji Ali Kuli Khan and his brothers do swear that they will not allow them to do so, and will not go back on their promise to assist the Sardar Muhtesham and the Sardar Ashraf, that they will place their lives and property at their service, and that whatever Haji Khan asks for himself he will ask for them also, and will abide by the conditions of the former agreement, and will without the slightest reserve assist the Sardar Muhtesham and Salar Ashraf, and will spend his life and property in the advancement of the national cause.

If any of the members of the family of Bikhani Marhum does not act in accordance with these agreements Haji Khan is prepared to resist them for the protection of the Sardar Muhtesham and the Salar Ashraf and (the furtherance) of the constitutional cause. If anybody shall break these agreements let him be ruined for ever. God willing, Haji Khan is ready to assist the Sardar Muhtesham and the Salar Ashraf and the constitutional cause, moreover even if any of these with the Tehran, Kashan or Kinn armies are killed, this agreement shall yet hold good.

6th *Jamadi-us-Sani*, 1327.

(In the Sardar Bahadur's writing) :—

As long as I am alive I will serve the Sardar Muhtesham and Salar Ashraf, and swear on the Koran that I will treat the Sardar Muhtesham and the Salar Ashraf as I would my father, and will, to the best of my power, work for the advancement of this constitution.

"Death or Freedom!"

JAFFAR KULL

(In Aglu Nurullah's writing) :—

"Bismillah wasala'um ala min tabba allah Huda."

This agreement has been written by the consent of all, and we trust that it may be the means of increasing the honour and greatness of the Bakhtiari tribes for all time, and be for their credit and good name. May God, the Prophet, and the

Imams bless them, and may this agreement be enduring for all time and conducive to the good of the world.

ASKAR.

ABDULHURAJI NURULLAH IBN MUHD BAKIR.

17th *Jamadi-us-Sani*, 1327.

Haji Khan is responsible that the conditions of the Malamir Treaty are duly carried out.

(Above repeated from "Haji" to "ent.")

(Sealed)

JAFFAR KULI.  
KHUSRO KHAN.  
ALI KULI KHAN.  
NEJAF KULI KHAN.

(In the Samsam's handwriting) :—

The former, together with this agreement, shall in no way be broken, and every oath taken with regard to the Sardar Muhtesham and Salar Ashraf is correct, and I agree.

(Sealed) NEJAF KULI.

[39198]

No. 60.

Sir G. Borelay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 186.)

Sir,

Tehran, October 7, 1909.

DURING the past four weeks the working of the Government has undergone some changes. In my telegram No. 728 of the 13th September I reported the dissolution of the "Directoire." It was given out at the time that Mohammed Ali's departure from Tehran had so far cleared the situation, that there was no further need of the existence of a committee for superintending the proceedings of the Cabinet, and henceforward the latter was to act independently, and the body hitherto known as the "Directoire," enlarged by the addition of a number of new members, was to exercise merely advisory functions. There now seems little doubt that the change was due to the difficulty which the "Directoire" had found in controlling the two leading Ministers, Sipahdar and Sardar Assad. It wished to dissociate itself from the proceedings of these latter, especially in the matter of money, which Sipahdar in particular was suspected of misappropriating, in order probably to have a freer hand to call them to account when the Medjliss met.

For a time after the "Directoire" ceased to exist, its most prominent members, such as Yaki Zade and Hussein Kuli Khan, held themselves entirely aloof from the Government, and the Cabinet was left to itself. This arrangement did not answer, as the Ministers, deprived of the support of the men who will doubtless form the most influential section of the Medjliss, found their responsibilities too great, and they soon set to work to urge those men to abandon this attitude of aloofness. This they have succeeded in doing only to a certain extent, for though many of the members of the "Directoire" now attend the meetings of the Cabinet, I understand that the more important ones do so half-heartedly, and it is evident that the Cabinet no longer has such backing from them as enabled it some four weeks ago to undertake the serious responsibilities involved by some of the conditions they agreed to in the arrangement concluded with the two legations for Mohammed Ali's departure. As instances of this reluctance to involve themselves in responsibilities which might prove disagreeable when the Medjliss meets, may be mentioned their failure so far to give effect to their decision to reinstate M. Smirnow, and to renew Dr. Sadewski's appointment, and their hesitation to conclude the transaction for the pawning of some of the State jewels,

both of which measures they feel would provoke criticism from the Medjliss. I believe, indeed, that the proposal to pledge the jewels has now been abandoned. As regards M. Smirnow and Dr. Sadowski, M. Poklewski has been assured that the matter will be satisfactorily settled, but M. Smirnow, who had been expressly told by the Regent that his services were no longer required, has received no invitation to resume his duties, and Dr. Sadowski's appointment has not been, like Dr. Lindley's, renewed by the new Shah.

But for all that the Cabinet does not now enjoy the full support of the leading nationalists. I see no reason to think that for the moment any attempt will be made to upset it. I believe that though there is every intimation of replacing it by a Ministry of a more advanced character when the Medjliss meets, until then the prominent nationalists wish it to continue in office.

Quite recently its position has been strengthened, as far as appearances go, by the appointment of a Prime Minister and a Minister for Foreign Affairs. These two posts were long kept vacant in the hope that Nasr-ul-Mulk would accept them. Nasr-ul-Mulk has now expressly refused to take office for the present, and Sipahdar has been appointed Prime Minister and Ala-es-Saltaneh Minister for Foreign Affairs. Sipahdar's appointment is looked upon in some quarters as a victory over the members of the "Directoire," due to the latter's fear of the men who marched with Sipahdar to Tehran, but I doubt the correctness of this view. It is more than doubtful whether much sympathy exists between him and the Mujah-ed-Din. At the time these were threatening Tehran he was generally regarded as a reluctant figurehead, and his men are probably more in sympathy with the advanced nationalists than with their former leader. At any rate, since his elevation to his present office, there has been no indication that he feels he owes his position to any military backing. Probably the leading nationalists do not mind how the posts in the Cabinet are distributed, so long as it can tide over the time until the Medjliss meets.

Since the message of the Minister of Finance to the two legations through M. Bizot, reported in my telegram No. 730 of the 17th September, I have received no hint that the Government is about to apply to us for money. As you are aware, the Ziles-Sultan has paid up 100,000 toman, and this and other smaller contributions of a like kind, with what they can get from more regular sources, of which perhaps the mint is the most productive, should enable the Government to carry on in the present hand-to-mouth fashion until the Medjliss meets. The elected deputies present in Tehran number, I am told, some forty-five, or only fifteen or so short of a quorum.

From the provinces during the last four weeks the news has been, apart from the chronic disorder on the southern roads, relatively good. No further disturbances have been reported from the Sultaniah or Kerman districts, which were mentioned last month as the principal seats of disorder. Troops have been sent to the former district, and Kavan-ul-Mulk has arrived at Kerman as the new governor. The Kerman district has long been suffering from want of a governor, and Kavan-ul-Mulk's arrival seems to have resulted in some improvement. The road to Yazd is reported clear of robbers as far north as Anar. Sardar Jani, a Bakhtiari khau, the new governor of Yazd, is expected shortly at his post with 400 of his tribesmen. It is hoped that these will restore order on the Yazd-Ispahan route. In Azerbaijan I hear from Mr. Acting Consul-General Smart nothing but good of Mukher-es-Saltaneh, who seems to be acting with firmness and tact. His task will be easier when the Russian Government act on the recommendation of their Minister in Tehran, and withdraw a substantial portion of their troops in the neighbourhood of Tabreez. I also hear good reports of the new governor of Fars, Saham-ed-Dowleh. He gives promise of governing with a firm hand.

Disquieting news comes from the Lingah district, where Seyyid Hussein Lari is said to have taken Bastok, and to be threatening the port of Lingah. I have pressed the Government to take measures for the repression of the Seyyid and his following. I have no particulars as to the motives of this troublesome person, and the Government itself does not seem clear as to his purpose, but there seems no doubt in the minds of our consular officers in the Gulf that permanent tranquillity in the south is impossible while he is at liberty. Fortunately the Government are taking measures against him. Troops have been sent by the governor of the Gulf ports to protect Lingah, and Sardar Assad tells me that the Government are confident of being able to bring him under control.

Except for the proceedings of Seyyid Hussein Lari, no disturbances of any moment have been reported to the legation. Indeed, I may say that during the last few weeks there has been a very remarkable falling off in the number of telegrams from His

Majesty's consulates in Persia, and I am inclined to think that, with the important exception of the southern roads, the general state of the country is less bad than at any time since my arrival in Persia.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

[39200]

No. 61.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 188.)

Sir,

Tehran, October 8, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia for the last four weeks.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 61.

No. 10.—Monthly Summary of Persian Events.

Tehran.

AT the end of September Sipahdar, the Minister for War, became President of the Council of Ministers, and Ala-es-Sultaneh was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs.

2. M. Poklewski-Kozielecki arrived at Tehran on the 23rd September, and presented his credentials to Sultan Ahmed Shah and the Regent a few days later. His Excellency made the usual speech, assuring His Majesty of his intention to maintain and strengthen the traditional good relations between Russia and Persia.

3. Mohammed Ali Mirza, the ex-Shah, left Enzeli for Russia on the 29th September.

4. Tentative proposals have been made to the Imperial Bank by the Persian Government with the object of mortgaging some of the Crown jewels, but nothing definite has as yet resulted. In the meantime the Government have obtained funds by the old-fashioned method of extracting contributions from wealthy persons. This Ziles-Sultan was forced to pay 20,000*l.* before being allowed to leave Resht. Nizames-Sultaneh, Saad-ul-Mulk, and Muin-es-Sultan have each paid 3,000*l.* and Amir-ed-Dowleh is paying about 2,000*l.* a-month.

5. Prince Firman Farma resigned office as Minister of Justice only in October, but his successor has not yet been nominated.

6. Order continues to be well maintained at Tehran by the police administration under M. Yepren.

7. It is said that only about 400 Bakhtiari remain at Tehran out of the original force of some 4,000 men. The remainder have gradually returned to their own country. Those at Tehran appear to be well under control.

8. A certain amount of dissatisfaction is felt by the general public at the manner in which the Government is being conducted, and it is even suggested that Sipahdar and Sardar Assad are bent on making money for themselves. The press has taken the matter up, and has lately severely criticised these two leaders, for which one paper was recently suppressed.

9. The former "Directoire," composed of the Tehran deputies for the National Assembly, continues to meet and to discuss affairs of public interest, but their influence has been greatly diminished. Elections continue to be held in the provinces, and it is hoped that the necessary quorum of sixty-one members will have assembled at Tehran by the 15th October in order that Parliament should assemble.

10. The Turkish Ambassador, Hussein Hassib Bey (not Ghulib Bey, as stated in this last summary), is showing considerable activity in advancing Pan-Islamic ideas.

11. Reports received from Bagdad show that the clergy of Kerbela and Nejsaf continue to take a great interest in Persian affairs, and propose to select four of their number to represent them in Parliament at Tehran, though it seemed improbable that the scheme will be carried out, as there is no unanimity among the ulama.

G. P. CHURCHILL, *Oriental Secretary.*

## Tebreez.

1. The general situation in Azerbaijan forms the subject of a separate despatch. The Russian Minister at Tehran informed Sir G. Barclay early in October that he had advised his Government to make a considerable reduction in the number of Russian troops in Azerbaijan.

2. In the middle of September Sattar Khan was dispatched to Ardebil to restore order. His arrival there has had a good effect, and the country round Ardebil is reported quiet.

## Resht.

1. The ex-Shah arrived at Resht, on his way to Russia, on the 27th September. He reached Enzeli next day, and left for Petrovsk on the 30th.

2. On the 30th September His Majesty's vice-consul learned that Hussein Khan, Kasmai, who, with twenty-five Leghhis, was in charge of Zil-es-Sultan, intended to molest the latter, and should he refuse to pay in cash the 60,000*l.* demanded by the Government to remove him to Rahmatabad.

On the 16th September Zil-es-Sultan finally agreed to pay the amount demanded, and arranged with the Imperial Bank of Persia to pay 20,000*l.* at once, and the remainder in four monthly instalments of 10,000*l.* each. He gave the bank receipts of the Bank of Bombay for the deposit of 34 per cent. Indian script, which, Mr. Rabino is confidently informed, he has in deposit at the Bank of Bombay to the value of 150,000*l.* The Imperial Bank at Tehran, however, refused to pay the money until the transfer of the script had been regularly made and registered in the vice-consulate.

On the 23rd Kerim Khan, a leading Resht nationalist, ordered the Zil-es-Sultan's guards to worry him until he paid. His son, Bahram Mirza, was no longer allowed to see his father, and his servants were also kept away from him. Mr. Hart, the manager of the local branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia, who had visited the Zil-es-Sultan frequently, was also refused admittance. Bahram Mirza then asked for leave to call at the bank to arrange for the payment of the 20,000*l.* One of the guards accompanied him, but on arrival at the bank he informed the guard that he could go, as he, Bahram Mirza, was now under foreign jurisdiction.

On the 24th September Mr. Rabino sent word to the governor-general that Mr. Hart complained of not being allowed to see the Zil-es-Sultan, and that this seemed only to be delaying the settlement. Mr. Rabino also asked that Bahram Mirza's effects might be returned to him. Sardar Motamid replied that he was acting under instructions from Tehran, but that Bahram Mirza could fetch his effects and would not be molested.

On the 25th Mr. Hart was allowed to see Zil-es-Sultan, and, at the former's request, Mr. Rabino went with him for the legalisation of certain documents; 20,000*l.* was handed over in cash to the governor-general, who gave Zil-es-Sultan a receipt countersigned by Hussein Khan, Kasmai. Zil-es-Sultan was in good spirits, but complained that the night before one of his guards had threatened to throw a bomb at him, that it was intended to remove him to Rahmatabad, that his servants were kept away from him, that his guards sat down and partook of his food with him, spat about the place, and at night sat outside his room drinking spirits. When he asked them to make less noise they replied, "If you cannot sleep—well, don't sleep." He also complained that Kerim Khan had spoken to him and of him in abusive terms. Although left alone with Mr. Rabino this was all Zil-es-Sultan complained of, and Mr. Rabino's enquiries support the view that this was all there was to complain of, and that various reports which were current, e.g., that he had been made to swallow 4 gallons of water were without foundation. His Majesty's Minister received from Mr. Hart, through the chief manager of the Imperial Bank at Tehran, most alarming reports, which went so far as to say that if something were not done soon, not only Zil-es-Sultan's life, but Mr. Hart's also, would be in danger. Mr. Rabino's reports in no way confirm these statements. Mr. Rabino reports that Kerim Khan's misbehaviour towards Zil-es-Sultan is universally condemned, and that Hussein Khan, Kasmai, withdrew from the command of his guard on the 22nd when he saw the attitude which Kerim Khan was taking up. He appears to have treated Zil-es-Sultan with civility throughout. In reply to representations, His Majesty's Minister received assurances that strict orders had been given to treat Zil-es-Sultan with honour and respect. Zil-es-Sultan left Resht on the 26th September, and was accompanied to Enzeli by Mr. Hart. He stated that he would travel to London by Raku, and would go later on to the Riviera. He expressed his intention of returning to Persia next spring.

3. M. Poklewski-Koziell arrived on the 21st September, and left next day for Tehran.

4. Saad-ed-Dowleh and the Imam Juma of Tehran, two of the persons ordered into exile by the new Government, have been detained at Resht on their way to Europe until they have appointed agents at Tehran to settle any claims the Government may have against them.

5. During the past month two nationalist soldiers, convicted of murder, were hanged in front of the governor's house.

## Zinjan.

During the past month the situation here has caused some anxiety. Influenced by a prominent mullah, Kurban Ali, the people refused for some time to accept the governor appointed by the Government. It appeared at one time that troops might have to be sent, but the latest news is to the effect that the people have made their submission, and that the governor, Mo'in-ed-Dowleh, who is now on his way to his post, will be peaceably received.

## Meshed.

1. The information given below has reached His Majesty's consul-general from various independent sources, and he believes it to be substantially correct.

*Darra Gaz.*—Mansur-ul-Mulk has been asked to pay 120*l.* for the support of the Russian Consulate. He declines to pay more than 80*l.*, but the deal is still on.

*Russian Protection.*—Muntasir-ul-Mulk, a rich land-owner, has been asked to pay 1,000*l.* for the right of receiving Russian protection. He begged for British protection, but being told that this was out of the question, he is bargaining with the Russian consulate, and has offered 600*l.* Shaukat-ed-Dowleh also made an appeal to Major Sykes for protection. He is now dealing with Prince Dabija.

Haji Hussein Agha has given Prince Dabija forage and fuel for a year in return for his hoisting the Russian flag over his house. This is in addition to the sums already paid for support in the Farman filibustering expedition.

2. According to the governor-general, the state of things in Khorassan appeared to be growing steadily worse. The Assembly and the priests both seemed to be tired of Rukn-ed-Dowleh, and the former telegraphed to Tehran asking for his dismissal. This request is believed to be the result of an intrigue by certain persons who wished to get Ali-ed-Dowleh appointed governor-general. The Minister of the Interior conversed by telegraph with the Assembly. He demanded 20,000*l.* in four days. It was agreed that the money should be paid in four months. Major Sykes thinks it unlikely that the money will be collected. One of the leading priests, Fazil, was shot dead towards the end of August. His death was said to have been ordered by a secret society in Resht. In Darra Gaz one Mirza Baba has been looting and torturing, and, according to Prince Dabija, 1,000 families have fled across the border into Transcaspija. A body of Lashan robbers has been raiding villages near Tabas. Generally speaking, Major Sykes finds little reason for encouragement in the present situation.

3. Major Keenan, Captain Daukes, and Captain Gray arrived on the 3rd September. The two former left for Astrabad on the 6th. Major O'Connor left on the 16th for Birjand.

4. The elections for the National Assembly were completed by the 12th September, and the members are on their way to Tehran.

## Turbat-i-Haidari.

1. On the 1st September four Russian Cossacks arrived from Kerman on their way to Russia.

2. The report of the death of Assadullah has proved to be correct. Shuja-ul-Mulk took Zawa on the 17th August, and Assadullah was killed in the course of the fighting. Shuja-ul-Mulk then returned to Turbat and assumed the government, but as Mustafa Mirza was appointed governor he left for Karez. Sipahdar telegraphed from Tehran congratulating him on his success, and instructing him to arrest Salar Khan. He replied that the late expedition had cost him 800*l.*, of which he had not been repaid a penny, and that until he was paid he could not undertake another expedition. He is, moreover, an old friend of Salar Khan, and is unwilling to move against him.



3. Tabbas had for some months been the headquarters of a gang of robbers, who have plundered many caravans. A force was dispatched against them from Turbat early in September.

#### *Seistan.*

The situation is normal. The local assembly meets three times a-week, but appears to transact but little business.

#### *Ispahan.*

1. The interest in the elections for the National Assembly appears to have died away rapidly, and a comparatively small number of voters eventually gave in their votes. The final choice from among those elected at the first election has yet to be made.

2. Lieutenant Ranking, His Majesty's consul at Ahwaz, left for Ahwaz on the 4th October. He was accompanied by Mr. Worrall, consular assistant, and Mrs. Worrall, who are on their way to Bushiro.

3. Though the post had been robbed on one or two occasions, the general state of the roads appears to have improved, and no robberies have been reported to His Majesty's consul-general. Several European travellers have reached Ispahan without incident.

#### *Kashan.*

A son of one Naib Hussein, a notorious bad character, recently seized and carried off to the hills part of the Government arms and ammunition. A party of Bakhtiari has been sent in pursuit of him.

#### *Yezd.*

The town has remained quiet and the elections for the provincial assembly have been completed, though attempts were made to delay them by the circulation of baseless reports of a reactionary nature, as, for instance, that Muhammad Ali had been replaced on the throne by the Russians. A large number of robberies on various roads is reported, and the postal service is most irregular. Kawam-ul-Mulk reached Yezd early in September, and after a halt of a few days left for Kerman. His presence had a good effect on the local robbers, but his followers are said to have been guilty of several acts of oppression. The march of Kawam-ul-Mulk towards Kerman has for the moment opened that road. The Parsees inhabiting the villages round Yezd continue to be ill-treated. A number of them took refuge in His Majesty's vice-consulate early in October, but all but six have now left. In one week alone seventy-one Parsees—men, women, and children—left the neighbourhood of Yezd for India via Bushiro. Fearful of being detained at that port, they requested His Majesty's acting vice-consul to prevent their being molested *en route*. The tafsis appear to be the worst oppressors of the Parsee community. His Majesty's Minister has made strong representations to the Minister of the Interior both on the subject of the general disorder around Yezd and on that of the tyranny practised towards the Parsees. In reply he was informed that Sardar-i Jumg (Bakhtiari), the new governor, was now at Ispahan, and would proceed to Yezd very shortly with a force sufficient to maintain order.

#### *Kermanshah.*

1. At the end of August the Ahmedawand Chelaby tribe, who had been driven away from Sulimaniyah by the Turkish authorities, as being a robber tribe, wrote to His Majesty's consul from Kassi-Shirin asking for British mediation with the Turks so that they might return to their country or for British protection. Mr. McDoull reported this to His Majesty's Minister, and was told in reply that His Majesty's Minister could neither give them protection nor mediate for them.

2. M. Pugin, agent for German indigo, passed through Kermanshah on his way to Bagdad in the middle of September. He stated that he had obtained orders amounting to 1,400*l.* in Hamadan.

3. On the 7th September the brother of Moin-i-Raya entered the town with a force, and being joined by friends in the town, seized certain bazaars positions. The opposite party assembled at the house of Zahir-ul-Mulk. The bazars were closed.

Moin-i-Raya himself was outside the town with a force, and had the support of the majority of the tribes. The Minister of the Interior summoned Zahir-ul-Mulk and his sons and Moin-i-Raya to Tehran. They disregarded the summons, but became reconciled a few days later. The danger of disturbances is for the moment averted. The town itself is quiet, and a system of police is being organised. Outside the town there is still much insecurity, and the governor has not the power to enforce his own orders. A large pilgrim caravan was looted outside the town, the victims including Afghan, Turkish, and Russian subjects. It is reported that the goods have been recovered, but the report lacks confirmation.

#### *Kerman.*

The town has remained quiet. Kawam-ul-Mulk arrived on the 28th September, accompanied by a force, and took up the appointment of governor-general. The Fars robbers, who had been plundering near Kerman, appear to have retired before he arrived. The Narmashir district has been the scene of several robberies. A caravan travelling from Kerman to Bam was robbed of merchandise to the value of 1,200*l.* on the 23rd September within 30 miles of Kerman. Kawam-ul-Mulk's arrival appears to have had a good effect on the general condition of the district.

#### *Shiraz.*

1. The town has remained quiet, though in the immediate neighbourhood several robberies have taken place. Saham-ed-Dowleh, the new governor-general, was visited by Soulat-ed-Dowleh at Abadeh, whence he travelled by the main road, which, until his arrival, had been practically closed by robbers, escorted by Arab horsemen sent by Nasr-ed-Dowleh. He arrived at Shiraz early in September, and at once issued orders for the elections for the National Assembly to be held as soon as possible. He has also turned his attention to the conditions of the roads, and has dispatched forces to open them up. At the time of his arrival the Arabs appeared to be quite out of hand, and the roads were quite unsafe, excepting only the Sarhad route to Ispahan, which Soulat-ed-Dowleh was keeping open. Yezdikhist, on the main Ispahan road, was towards the end of September surrounded and besieged by a large number of robbers, but it appears to have held its own. The main Bushire road has also been disturbed, and caravans are using the Firuzabad route.

2. His Majesty's consul reported on the 24th September that under pressure from the local Foreign Office agent, Nasr-ed-Dowleh had resigned the post of Russian consular agent, and that his resignation had been accepted.

#### *PERSIAN GULF.*

##### *Bushire.*

1. The governor-general received instructions during September from the Minister of the Interior to move against Seyyid Abdul Hussein Lari, who continues to disturb the peace of Lar and the Gulf districts. Darya Begi remained inactive, demanding money before he would move against the Seyyid, but the latter having taken Bustak, and Lingah being threatened by him, the "Persepolis" was dispatched with troops from Bushire at the beginning of October to Lingah. It seems clear that the Seyyid is a freebooter, as he pays no attention to either the Central Government or the chief priests at Korbela. From both these quarters he has been urged to cease from disturbing the peace of the country. His Majesty's Minister has communicated the Seyyid's actions, as reported by consular officers to the Persian Government, and has warned them that they will be held responsible for any loss incurred by British subjects.

2. The local assembly has continued to meet, but, excepting that it incurred a rebuke from Tehran for interfering in the case of a Dutch employé of the Customs Department, its proceedings have been of no special interest.

3. A report having reached Bushire that Seyyid Murteza Ahreni would soon be allowed to leave Necef for Bushire, Seyyid Assadullah, at the request of the governor-general and the local assembly, wrote to Necef deprecating his being allowed to return.



## Mohammerah.

1. The sheikh has been somewhat annoyed by demands from the Central Government for payment of revenue, and also by a telegram from the Minister of the Interior regarding the sheikh's nephew, Hanzal, who is in custody on well-founded suspicion of treacherous designs, and whom Surdar Assad says the sheikh should either exile or reinstate. The sheikh objects to being lectured by his allies, the Bekhtiaris, on his private affairs; and, as to revenue, he points out that scarcely any other governor has paid revenue for last year, as much less for this year.

2. The German firm of Wöckhaus and Co. are making Mohammerah their oil depot for Bussorah and the Bagdad trade, in order to avoid the very heavy storage charges levied by the Turkish Customs. They are importing no less than 142,500 cases of Fiume oil, to be kept in bond in Mohammerah and sold in Bussorah as required, the buyer to take delivery at Mohammerah. His Majesty's consul has been making confidential enquiries regarding the commercial relations existing between Haji Rais and Wöckhaus and Co. He has reason to believe that Haji Rais is secretly assisting Wöckhaus.

3. According to private information the Imperial Bank of Persia will open a branch in Mohammerah in December next.

C. B. STOKES, *Military Attaché.*

[39201]

No. 62.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 189.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 8, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez, reporting on recent events at Urumia, and on the activity of the new wali of Van, and Niazli Bey, an employé of the Ottoman debt, who have lately been visiting Urumia and the neighbouring districts.

I venture to draw your attention to the avowed object of the wali's visit to Urumia, and the probability indicated by Mr. Smart that the Persian Government when they are again in a position to take up the frontier question, will find themselves confronted with the *fait accompli* of a Turkish province extending over the frontier regions which were under Persian administration a few years ago.

I have read the passage indicated in the preceding paragraph to my Russian colleague.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 62.

*Acting Consul-General Smart to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 28.)

Sir,

*Tabreez, September 15, 1909.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 186 I have the honour to report that on the 31st August Bair Khan Beg, chief of the Begzadi Kurds, came to the Russian vice-consulate at Urumia, bringing with him several Cossack horses, which had been captured by the Kurds during the affray at Mir Sergia. He offered full apologies for the incident, and promised to restrain his men from troubling Christian villages. Mr. Boris Miller accepted his excuses, agreed to consider the incident as closed, and sent him away with a present.

Although it is fortunate that the incident has been thus closed without further complications, yet the effects of Mr. Boris Miller's unwise use of Russian troops are very regrettable. The fact remains that Russian soldiers were worsted by Kurds, who have received no punishment for their temerity. The Kurds, who since the withdrawal of the Turkish troops are masters of the Urumia district, are not likely to become less aggressive after this incident. However, the arrival of fifty Russian soldiers to reinforce the consular guard, which now numbers over 100 men, and the uncertainty as to the intentions of the Russians, will probably have a deterring influence on the Kurds. Mr. Brown, of the English mission, informs me that the general impression among the natives at Urumia is that this reinforcement is intended for an expedition

against the Kurds, and he adds that the wild talk of the Russian officers does not tend to combat this impression. However, Mr. Preobajenski, who has just replaced Mr. Boris Miller at Urumia, while on his way through Urumia, assured me that offensive operations would not be indulged in. My Russian colleague has also given me similar assurances. The Russian pretention to protect all orthodox Christians at Urumia often involves them in difficulties, but it is to be hoped that they will make no rash attempts against the Kurds, which might lead to serious complications with the Turks. The Turkish consul-general, here expressed to me very freely his apprehensions regarding the dispatch of Russian reinforcements to Urumia, and generally regarding Russian intentions on the Turco-Persian frontier.

The Turks, contrary to expectations, have not as yet availed themselves of the incident to make a forward movement. The new wali of Van, and a certain Niazli Bey, an employé of the Ottoman debt, have lately been visiting Urumia and the neighbouring districts. Niazli Bey's object was to study the question of the supply of salt for the Turkish frontier provinces, which has always been a difficulty. He proposes to establish, as an Ottoman debt enterprise, depôts on the frontier to collect large supplies of salt from the Lake of Urumia.

The wali, who was delightfully frank about his objects, announced that he was making a tour to arrange the administration of the regions between the vilayat of Van and "the new frontier." He said that he had recommended to the Porte that these regions should be endowed with a separate administration, depending directly on Constantinople. He hoped that it would thus be easier to control the frontier officials, who often acted in a very arbitrary manner. I am unable to ascertain how far this "new frontier" includes Baradost, Morgawar, and Torgawar, and probably other places beyond the neutral zone. When the Persian Government are again in a position to take up the frontier question, they will probably find themselves before the *fait accompli* of a Turkish vilayat or kaimakanlik extending over the frontier regions which were under Persian administration a few years ago.

The main object of these encroachments, avowed openly by the Turks, is of course to gain possession of the strategic points, but their encroachments, especially south of Urumia, where they were at one time almost on the Lake, extend far beyond these strategic points, and lead colour to the general Persian belief that they wish to acquire a port on the Lake for the salt supplies which are so necessary for their frontier provinces.

Meanwhile, the Urumia district is in a dangerous state of anarchy without a governor or troops. Muhlashedin-ess-Sultanchi, unable to procure any money, shows no sign of leaving Tabreez for his post, and it is impossible to say how long this situation may be prolonged.

I have, &c.

W. A. SMART.

[39158]

No. 63.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 557.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 15, 1909.*

I SPOKE to M. Sazonov this afternoon as to the continued presence of Russian troops at Kazvin. I told him that it was highly desirable that they should be withdrawn, for the following reasons. In the first place, all was perfectly tranquil at Telran, on the Resht-Kazvin road, and, indeed, in all the neighbourhood. In the second place, there were indications that a serious feeling existed in Persia against the continued stay of Russian troops, and that this feeling would probably shortly find outspoken expression, especially when the Assembly met within a fortnight or so. It would then doubtless be more difficult for Russia to withdraw her troops in face of a popular agitation than it would be at the present moment. We were exceedingly desirous that no anti-Russian agitation should arise and extend in Persia, and I begged him to cause steps to be taken to withdraw, or, at any rate, largely reduce the force at Kazvin. M. Sazonov said that the Russian Government had no desire to retain their troops without cause. Their stay in Persia cost money, and Russia reaped no advantage whatever from their presence. But there was no security that the present tranquillity would endure, and, indeed, it might be argued that peace reigned in consequence of the presence of the troops. It would place Russia in an absurd position if she were to withdraw the troops, and then if she were obliged to

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send them back again because troubles arose. The Russian Government must be consistent, and not have the appearance of not knowing their own minds from one day to another. The Russian press would severely attack the Government if they were to adopt a shilly-shallying policy. I observed that if I were ho I should not pay too much attention to what the press wrote; and to my mind it was of far more importance to secure the sympathy of the Persians. The tranquillity had not been seriously disturbed even before the arrival of the Russian troops, and so it could hardly be argued that their presence had been the cause of the present peaceful situation. If after their withdrawal serious troubles did arise, and Russia was compelled to send back her troops, no one would then be able to blame her. She would have done her best, and would have shown to all the world that she wished to fulfil her engagements, and if the force of circumstances compelled her to send back her troops, it would be clear that no other course was open. M. Sazonow remarked that before the dispatch of the troops to Kazvin the road from Teah had been so insecure that merchants feared to dispatch goods by it, and there had consequently been so great a loss in the receipts that the July coupon could not be paid. He asked if we had any doubts as to the sincerity and loyalty of the intentions of Russia. I replied that I was sure that my Government had no shadow of mistrust, but I was thinking of the effect produced in Persia, and I was much afraid of the consequences of an anti-Russian agitation. Moreover, the reactionaries and other anti-nationalist elements in Tehran might be encouraged by the hope that the Russian forces might assist them in their designs and aims.

M. Sazonow said that it would be impossible for him to induce the Cabinet at the present moment to withdraw or reduce the troops at Kazvin. He read to me some telegrams which he had received from Ardebil, which showed how dangerous a situation had suddenly arisen there. I said that I knew that affairs were in a very disturbed condition at Ardebil, but I did not see how this would affect the stay of the troops at Kazvin. The fact that a Russian force was at Kazvin would not and could not ameliorate the situation at Ardebil. M. Sazonow said that I had not understood his reference to Ardebil, but he would tell me confidentially that some little time back the question had been discussed in the Council of Ministers as to whether an expedition should not be sent to punish the Shahsevens for not having fulfilled certain obligations they had undertaken on account of the murder of a Russian officer and for other misdeeds. He had combated the dispatch of an expedition, and had eventually induced the Cabinet to abandon the idea, on his assurance that all was peaceful in the locality, and that 80,000 l. worth of Russian merchandise had recently passed through there in perfect safety. He had argued that an expedition might disturb the happily existing peaceful situation, and the Ministers had eventually agreed, on the faith of his assurances, to abstain from any military measures. Now his anticipation had proved entirely at fault, and the situation at Ardebil was about as bad as it could be. How could he at this moment go to the Council of Ministers and ask that they should consent to a withdrawal or reduction of the troops at Kazvin? If he said that all was tranquil there, and that there was no necessity to retain the troops, they would reply that there was no security that the quiet would continue, and that his forecasts as regards Kazvin would probably be as much at fault as were his assurances as to Ardebil. If the Persian Government were a really strong Government and had forces at their disposal, there would of course be no reason for Russian troops to remain in any part of Persia. But, as the Persian Government were clearly incapable of maintaining order, and as there was no immediate hope of a really settled order of things being established, he did not consider that it would be safe for Russia to withdraw all her troops. I said that I believed that the Persian Government had already dispatched troops to put matters straight at Ardebil. M. Sazonow said that if this were the case, and if the Persians by themselves were able to restore order at Ardebil, it would materially simplify the situation, but he must wait to see what really happened. He could assure me that as soon as the Russian Government could safely withdraw their troops they would do so, but more he could not say at the present moment.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON

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No. 64.

(No. 562.)

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith summary of a letter from the "Novoe Vremya" correspondent at Tehran, which appeared in that journal to-day, respecting the arrival of M. Poklewski in that capital and the problems awaiting him.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Summary of Letter, dated September 15 (28), in the "Novoe Vremya" of October 6 (19) from their Correspondent in Tehran.

OUR new Minister arrives at a time when the old régime has only just been overthrown, when a new Government has to be created out of absolute chaos. In these circumstances a definite, consistent policy is indispensable. The representatives at Tehran of the Ministries of War and Finance must not be the Minister's rivals (as M. Hartwig had reason to complain was the case), but his collaborators; they must confine themselves strictly to the affairs of their own departments, and not interfere in the province of our general Imperial interests in Persia. These general interests may be classified as follows:—

#### 1. The Russian Discount Loan Bank.

The losses of this bank amount at present to about 20,000,000 roubles, and are directly consequent upon the general crisis through which the country has been passing. If extraordinary measures are not taken to liquidate these millions, the whole of the bank must sooner or later follow its vanished funds in their aerial flight.

#### 2. Russian Commerce.

Russia imports more than half of all Persian products, and exports to Persia quite half of the goods which she must buy. The Russian Legation at Tehran, however, hampers rather than supports Russian trade. No less than 800 lawsuits of the Russian bank and its clients lie abeyant in pigeon-holes at the legation. The losses sustained under this head can only be recouped by dint of the most energetic support of the legation.

#### 3. Russian Loans.

Between 1900 and 1902 Russia lent Persia 32,000,000 roubles, and unless Russia takes some general measures to improve Russo-Persian trade the customs in North Persia will continue to fail to pay the monthly coupons on the Russian loans.

#### 4. A Russian Consulate-General at Tehran.

This should have been instituted fifty years ago, and its immediate creation by the Government is a matter of urgent necessity.

#### 5. The Persian Cossack Brigade.

The Russian Government should thoroughly reorganise the section, which is officered by Russians.

#### 6. Enzeli-Tehran Road.

In connection with this—the sole link between Tehran, Russia, and Europe—there are a whole series of outstanding accounts and suits against the Persian Government, which have hitherto not been pressed by the Russian Legation, nor has any satisfaction been received.

7. *Enzeli Port.*

Its present state is a scandal, and demands the serious attention of the Government.

8. *Railways.*

In March 1910 the convention between Russia and Persia on this subject expires. This convention has retarded the development of Persia. As the course for the Julfa-Tabreez Railway has already been prepared, Russia will not have to spend any great sum to lay the line along it next spring, and so link up Azerbaijan (the most fertile and richest province in Persia) with the Caucasus and Russia.

9. *Russian Telegraphs.*

England has two lines, whereas Russia has none, but only the right to send messages along the Persian wires. How well these are worked may be seen from the fact that a telegram sent by the Russian Minister from Kazvin to Tehran with reference to his arrival at the capital was received by the legation after M. Poklewski's arrival.

10. *Russian School.*

Russia is alone in not having such an establishment in Tehran, so this sphere of influence is at present closed to her.

[39176]

No. 65.

*Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 180.)

Sir,

*The Hague, October 18, 1909.*

WITH reference to Lord Acland's despatch No. 7, Commercial, of the 30th January last, I have the honour to report that, referring to the observations made by the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs in the recently published "Orange Book" on the subject of Dutch diplomatic representation in Persia, and the concession reported to have been granted by the Persian Government for irrigation works on the Karun River at Ahwaz (see précis enclosed in my despatch No. 170 of the 8th instant), M. Graadt van Roggen, the Dutch engineer who is responsible for the plan of irrigation in question, in an article in the "Nieuwe Courant," urges the importance in the interests of his scheme of the post of Tehran being once more filled by a diplomatic representative, who will be able to obtain from the new Government in Persia compensation for the failure of its predecessor to fulfil its obligations towards the Netherlands Minister at Tehran. According to the writer of the article, a concession was given verbally to M. Sturler, former Netherlands Minister at Tehran, for the construction of works for the irrigation of 500,000 hectares (1,235,550 acres) of arable land for a period of ninety-nine years, under special conditions. The Persian Government afterwards retracted, and in the place of the verbal concession they gave a distorted written declaration which was of no value. In the opinion of the writer, the moment is opportune for obtaining the concession, now that the Young Persians are glad of an opportunity to show that they have broken with the old régime and are anxious to proceed on a path of progress. M. Graadt van Roggen points out the necessity for prompt action in view of the competition to be expected from foreign countries, whose attention has been attracted by the attempt of the Dutch to obtain the above concession.

He refers to the activity of other countries in the Arabistan district (in which Ahwaz is situated), and states that a Franco-Persian Company has been formed with the object of bringing into cultivation the plain of Arabistan, or at least a part of it; and also that the Persian Oil Company has offered to advance a sum of money to the Governor of Arabistan for the irrigation of the district along the banks of the Shaoor, a tributary of the Karun River.

Some definite concession must, the writer of the article points out, be obtained by the Dutch from the Persian Government, otherwise no Government financiers will

interest themselves in the Karun irrigation scheme, nor could a syndicate be formed as suggested by the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs in the "Orange Book" above referred to.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

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No. 66.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 460.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 25, 1909.*

NAVIGATION on Lake Urumia.

Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 745 of the 1st October and 758 of the 24th October.

Russian Government realise the danger of Germans being successful in their negotiations with Imam Kuli, and the Russian Minister at Tehran has been instructed to watch the matter carefully. The Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that his Government thought that their transport concession might be interpreted to mean that further concessions for navigation on the lake were barred. I said that I understood that the concession was given to Imam Kuli before the Russians had received theirs, and that he was now looking for foreign partnership, but that he did not intend to get rid of his concession altogether. I did not see how the Russians could hinder Imam Kuli from seeking partners abroad, unless they came to some agreement with him quickly. The Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs said his Government would endeavour to do this.

His Excellency hinted that the concession could be rendered valueless if the Russian Government were to stop the necessary material being brought into Persia. I told him that another route might be found, and that this would be a rather arbitrary proceeding.

[39384]

No. 67.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)*

(No. 461.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 25, 1909.*

PLEASE refer to telegrams from Tehran Nos. 756 and 757 of the 23rd and 24th instant respectively, concerning the disorders at Ardabil.

I spoke to M. Sazonov on the subject to-day, and he told me that as Russian troops could not get to Ardabil in less than a fortnight, it was imperative for the Imperial Government to send any for the protection of their nationals; and consequently he has given a warning at Tehran to the effect that in case the Karadaghie or Shabsevans inflict any injury or damage on Russians, the responsibility will fall on the Persian Government. His Excellency also observed that Sattar Khan was thinking of applying to the Russian Government for their protection. On my inquiring whether Behm Khan could not be persuaded by the Russian authorities to stop ravaging the district, M. Sazonov answered that this chief Russian doctor had urged him strongly to keep quiet, but no advice was of any avail. News had reached his Excellency of discord having broken out between the Karadaghie and Shabsevans, and this might render a solution of the difficulty easier.

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No. 68.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 26.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 25, 1909.*

IN reply to your letter, dated the 11th September, 1909, as to the loan of the services of an officer of the Government of India for a topographical survey of part of Persia on behalf of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, I am directed by Viscount [1684]

P

Morley to enclose copy of telegraphic correspondence with the Government of India on the subject.

Lord Morley would suggest that enquiry should be made of the company as to the reply to be made to the questions asked in the telegram from the Government of India.

I am, &c.  
R. RITCHIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 68.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, September 22, 1909.*

PROPOSED topographical survey in Western Persia.

Please see papers forwarded with letter, dated the 17th instant, from Secretary, Political Department, India Office. Please state whether services of officer for survey can be spared and arrangements stated in company's letter of the 6th instant be made. Necessary action should be taken as soon as possible if you agree. Cost defrayed by company.

Inclosure 2 in No. 68.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P. *October 21, 1909.*

OFFICER for topographical survey in Western Persia. See your telegram dated the 22nd September.

Please let us know for what period services of officer are required; also the extent of the work and the scale on which maps will be needed. Our company's representations at Mohammerah have not hitherto been able to afford us information.

[39471]

No. 69.

*Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received October 26.)*

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,  
October 25, 1909.

Sir,  
I HAVE the honour to reply to your letter of the 14th instant on the subject of repairs to the Godar Bridge.

When we found that our information regarding the defects in the bridge was insufficient to enable us to decide as to real cause of trouble, and consequently to recommend a remedy, we followed what we think to be the only reasonable course, and advised the chiefs to send an expert to examine and report what should be done.

The chiefs have apparently accepted this advice, for we have just received information by telegraph from our agent at Tehran that they have agreed to employ our road engineer, Mr. Soham, to visit the bridge. Mr. Soham is to start on this expedition on the 20th instant. Our instructions to our agents abroad on this subject have been:—

1. That our agent is to supply an estimate of the cost of the examination for approval by the chiefs, or he may arrange a fixed price with them for the examination.
2. That Mr. Soham will examine the bridge, furnish a report on its condition, and an estimate of the probable cost of the repairs he may consider necessary.
3. That it is to be understood in advance that we will not under any circumstances contract to execute repairs for a fixed sum. If the chiefs, after receiving Mr. Soham's report and recommendation, wish us to take action, they must authorise us to expend a certain sum, and if that sum is at all likely, in our opinion, to suffice for the purpose, we will spend it to the best advantage for their account and risk.

We think we need not, under these circumstances, take up at length your reference to your letter of the 4th May last, as the chiefs have not, to our knowledge, yet attacked the reputation of either the eminent engineer who designed the bridge or the well-known engineering firm who constructed it. It hardly appears to us necessary, therefore, to justify our selection of them. The engineer was the late L. E. Wells, C.E.,

of Manchester, and the constructors were Messrs. de Bergue, of Strangeways Iron-works, Manchester.

Nor have the chiefs ever to our knowledge claimed that we have given them any sort of guarantee, either expressed or implied, in regard to the structure of the bridge. The original contract would effectually dispose of any such claim, which in any case would be too widely opposed to ordinary usage to be admissible unless supported by written evidence that an arrangement of that nature had been made.

I have, &c.  
THOS. H. ROBERTS  
(for Secretary).

[39490]

No. 70.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)*

(No. 759.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, October 26, 1909.*

SITUATION at Shiraz.

His Majesty's acting-consul at Shiraz telegraphs as follows:—

So far the governor-general has given proof of courage and integrity and merits all possible support, but the small number of troops at his disposal hampers his position very greatly.

The force of Cossacks sent from Ispahan is held up. I am informed, close to the Fars border by a superior number of Kugheli tribesmen; the prestige of the governor-general, which it is all important to maintain, may be seriously damaged by this slight rebuff. The Persian Government should, I therefore suggest, be pressed to dispatch an important force here without delay. To ensure the junction of the two detachments a small loan might, if necessary, be arranged for the expenses of the troops, and its payment made dependent on their arrival.

If Sabam, the present governor-general, is unable to master the situation, no other Persian will have any chance of success.

Order is being ensured on the Russian trade route by the presence of an armed force, it seems reasonable therefore that we should ensure order in our case either by granting a loan to the Persian Government, or by the maintenance of armed guards.

Saham can be trusted to employ adequately any troops that may be put under his orders.

The Minister of the Interior, to whom I read the first two paragraphs, and emphasised the need for reinforcements, informed me that a regiment of infantry which was due at Ispahan would at once be dispatched to the aid of Saham. He made no allusion to the question of a loan.

[38155]

No. 71.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 146.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 27, 1909.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 169, Confidential, of the 9th ultimo, respecting the Turco-Persian frontier at Mohammerah, and transmitting copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Bushire.

The circumstances in which the mediating commissioners in 1850 defined the frontier from the Persian Gulf to Havizeh are fully explained on p. 8 of the Foreign Office memorandum of the 8th December, 1906, of which a copy is in the possession of His Majesty's Legation. While His Majesty's Government have no desire whatever to disturb the frontier *status quo* as locally observed, and which, they are well aware, never precisely coincided with the line as drawn in 1850 by the commissioners of Great Britain and Russia, and indeed as subsequently accepted by the Persian Government, they would hesitate to approve Mr. Wilson's contention that the line as defined in 1850 was cancelled by any subsequent declaration of the two mediating Powers. That line was, after an exhaustive examination of the conflicting claims of Persia and Turkey, defined by the mediating commissioners as an equitable compromise, and such evidence as exists goes to show that it was upheld by the later commission which met in 1876. His Majesty's Government could not therefore formally support the Sheikh of Mohammerah in claiming that his frontier extends beyond that line except after

consultation with the Russian Government, and as the result of an agreement with the Turkish Government, who are in possession of a copy of the map of 1850.

You should inform Mr. Wilson that the map enclosed in his despatch No. 214 of the 12th June is that of the mediating commissioners of 1850.

I am, &c.  
E. GREY.

[39626]

No. 73.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 190.)  
Sir,

Tehran, October 9, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 179 of the 24th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note from the administrator-general of the customs, giving the gross receipts of his administration for the first six months of this year as well as those for the same period last year.

M. Mornard's note affords most instructive reading.

It will be seen that while the customs receipts from the general trade of Persia have increased by some 96,300 toman (19,260L.), the duties on that portion of it which comes from the direction of Russia show an augmentation of more than 200,000 toman (40,000L.) over those of the same period of the preceding year.

At the ports and frontier town (Kermanshah), through which the bulk of British imports pass, the administration has, however, suffered a loss of over 110,000 toman (22,000L.) as compared with 1908.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, as the data may be of some use to his Excellency, should M. Isvolsky again revert, in the course of conversation, to the heavy losses suffered by Russian trade during the last few months.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY

Inclosure in No. 72.

## CUSTOMS STATISTICS.

GROSS Receipts for first Six Months of 1909 compared to same period of 1908  
(i.e., March 21 to September 21).

o.	Country.	March 21 to September 21, 1908.	March 21 to September 21, 1909.	Increase in 1909.	Decrease in 1909.
		Toman.	Toman.	Toman.	Toman.
1	Bushire and Lengeh .. ..	163,000	267,491	..	104,400
2	Bander Abbas and McKen ..	56,200	71,651	..	15,000
3	Mohammereh and Alwaz ..	74,000	48,701	15,300	..
4	Kermanshah, Kasr, and Kur- distan .. ..	231,000	244,949	..	11,600
5	Talreez, Fuman, Kol, and Jafra ..	281,000	187,500	93,500	..
6	Astara, Tafish, and Moghan ..	81,000	83,225	..	2,200
7	Ezozli, Rudisser, and Telekaban ..	820,000	252,272	67,000	..
8	Mechelisser .. ..	108,000	54,550	53,500	..
9	Bander Gey and Tancumain ..	61,700	57,002	4,700	..
10	Meshek, Kuchan, and Seistan ..	130,500	146,790	1,000	16,000
11	Parcel Post (Tehran). ..	7,000	6,079	..	..
	Total .. ..	1,516,500	1,420,220	..	..

Total increase in 1909, 96,300 toman.

[39647]

No. 73.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 28.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copies of enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 23rd September, relative to the proposed early repayment by the Sheikh of Koweit of the first instalment of the loan granted him last June.

India Office, October 27, 1909.

Inclosure 1 in No. 73.

Major Trevor to Government of India.

September 9, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.  
PLEASE refer to the correspondence ending with Resident's letter dated the 20th June. Now sheikh says that he would rather repay the first instalment of the loan in the following manner: (1.) 40,000 rupees in cash on the 22nd September at Koweit; (2.) 60,000 rupees to be debited against rent which is due in October on account of Bender Sheikh lease.

I think that I could, with the assistance of the Senior Naval Officer, arrange for the first if Government agree.

Inclosure 2 in No. 73.

Government of India to Major Trevor.

September 15, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.  
KOWEIT loan: your telegram, dated the 9th September. To payment of the first instalment of the loan in manner proposed by the sheikh there is no objection.

Necessary steps will be taken to adjust the 60,000 rupees against the rent due this year to the sheikh.

[39703]

No. 74.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 760.)

Tehran, October 28, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.  
EXPORT of tobacco from Persia.

I have received the following telegram from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Bushire:—

"It appears from statement made by agent of Russian steamer that in three or four months the contract he holds for agency of Société Toulbac will expire, and it is reported that Wöckhaus are making efforts to obtain it in the interests of German shipping traffic.

"This carrying contract has been for eight years in the hands of the Russians, and I hope in the event of the Société Toulbac not extending the contract of Russian agent that an English company may be given preference over any tenders on the part of German firms. I understand from Stricks' local agents that they are communicating with Constantinople in this matter, and as I believe that the management of the société has English connections in British sphere, you will perhaps see your way to asking His Majesty's Embassy in Constantinople to support the case of the British company if there is any danger of Germans obtaining contract. Neither Smyrna nor Beirut have hitherto been ports of call for English or for German line."

M. Pukhowski, to whom I communicated substance of above, is informing St. Petersburg.

Russian Government might see no objection to instructing their Embassy at Constantinople to press for renewal of contract at present held by Russian agent, [1684]

while His Majesty's Government could similarly urge the appointment of Stricks' agent if société withdraws agency from Russians.

As a result of a request on the part of the Ottoman Bank on the 9th July, 1908, for our protection for the company, I received instructions to promote its interests in so far as they were identical with our own.

The tobacco carrying trade amounts to 1,100 tons of freight yearly, of which the British combine has hitherto enjoyed a large share owing to the friendly relations it maintained with Russian shipping agents.

[39766]

No. 75.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

(No. 473.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

RUSSIAN troops in Persia.

How many Russian troops are stationed at Kazvin, and what is the strength of the force left at Tabreez?

Please report by telegraph.

Foreign Office, October 28, 1909.

[39795]

No. 76.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 29.)

Sir,

India Office, October 28, 1909.

I AM directed by Viscount Morley to enclose, for the consideration of Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of a secret letter from the Government of India recommending the retention of Lieutenant A. T. Wilson in Persia for a period of four months from the date of his relief at Mohammerah, in order that he may examine the question of effecting a connection between Bushire and some point on the Jahrum-Alliabad-Firuzabad section of the Bunder Abbas-Lar-Jahrum-Shiraz route.

The expenditure entailed by the proposal is estimated at a sum of 2,000 rupees for contingent expenses, in addition to Lieutenant Wilson's present emoluments of 753 rs. 12 a. a month.

Lord Morley would be glad to learn Sir E. Grey's views on the proposal, which is put forward on the understanding that a moiety of the charges connected with it would be borne by British revenues.

The question of communications between Bushire and Shiraz was touched upon\* in the evidence given before the Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence on the Bagdad Railway, southern Persia, and the Persian Gulf.

I am, &amp;c.

R. RITCHIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 76.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Simla, September 16, 1909.

WE have the honour to forward, for your Lordship's favourable consideration, a copy of a letter which we have received from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, requesting sanction to the retention in Persia of Lieutenant A. T. Wilson for a period of four months after the termination of his duties with the Oil Syndicate guard at Ahwaz, in order to examine the possibilities and most convenient means of effecting a connection between Bushire and some point on the Jahrum-Alliabad-Firuzabad section of the Bunder Abbas-Lar-Jahrum-Shiraz route.

2. As your Lordship is aware, Lieutenant Wilson has already written a report on the feasibility of a railway from Bunder Abbas to Shiraz—a project in which His Majesty's Government have expressed their interest.† We are of opinion that, even

\* Vide questions 517, 556, 937, and 1186.

† Vide Memorandum, dated August 13, 1907, from the Director of Military Operations to the Foreign Office.

† Vide Foreign Office Memorandum, dated October 3, handed to M. Izvolsky on October 14, 1908.

though action in the way of railway construction may not be possible for some time, the proposed inquiry will be useful in connection with that project and also for the general purpose of improving our knowledge of this part of the country.

3. Since Major Cox's letter was written, Lieutenant Wilson has been temporarily appointed to act as His Majesty's consul at Mohammerah, in which post he may remain for some months, pending consideration of the permanent arrangements to be made for charge of the consulate. We trust that your Lordship will, in the circumstances explained, approve of Lieutenant Wilson's retention in Persia for a period of four months from the date of his relief at Mohammerah, and that you will sanction the grant to him, for this period, of his present\* emoluments, and also a sum of 2,000 rupees for contingent expenses, as recommended by Major Cox, a moiety of the charges involved under both heads being met by His Majesty's Government.

We have, &amp;c.

MINTO.

O'MOORE CREAUGH.

J. O. MILLER.

W. L. HARVEY.

G. F. WILSON.

S. P. SINHA.

H. H. RISLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 76.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, June 5, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to submit, for the favour of consideration, a proposal for the retention of the services of Lieutenant A. T. Wilson for a few months after the termination of his present appointment with the Oil Syndicate guard, which seems likely to return to India at no distant date.

2. A recent Renter stating that Russia intends to push on the railway from Julia to Tabreez indicates that the embargo in the south may at any moment be removed, and that we shall be left free to consider our own interests.

3. Two years ago Lieutenant Wilson travelled up the road from Bunder Abbas to Shiraz via Lar and Jahrum, and drew up a report on the route for the division of the chief of the staff.

It is of great importance that we should have fuller information as to the possibilities and most convenient means of connection between Bushire and some point on the Jahrum-Alliabad-Firuzabad section of the route.

We now have an officer on the spot with two surveyors who has already done a great amount of most valuable pioneer work, and has become thoroughly experienced in the conditions now existing and the limitations which they impose; and I consulted him a few days ago as to whether he was prepared to undertake the work should sanction be obtainable. He is willing and anxious to do so, as will be seen from the transcript of his remarks on the subject which I attach.

I very much hope that the Government of India will be pleased to sanction the proposal, i.e., the extension of Lieutenant Wilson's deputation and emoluments for four months after the return of the Oil Company's guard to India, and the provision of 2,000 rupees for contingent expenses on the understanding that the latter sum will be met as far as possible by reappropriation.

I respectfully request that early orders may be passed in order that, if the proposal is approved, the Survey of India may be asked to supply certain maps and instruments required.

Note.—Pending receipt of Government of India's reply a copy has not been forwarded to Tehran.

P. Z. COX.

Inclosure 3 in No. 76.

*Observations by Lieutenant Wilson, dated May 25, 1909.*

I WOULD suggest that I be given a four months' extension of my present post and emoluments with permission to employ the civilian surveyor now with me, and also another (military) surveyor.

Excluding pay, the cost of Government outlined by the proposed investigation would be about 2,000 roubles; in this sum would be included all contingent expenses, such as transport, guards, presents, &c.

As the whole area of country is wholly unknown at present, in order to find a suitable alignment through it, I should traverse it in various directions to begin with before finally settling any proposed alignment. Hence the comparatively long period (four months) that I suggest.

I do not think that such a good opportunity for getting this work done cheaply will recur again for some time.

I am on the spot with a good civilian surveyor and am, moreover, fairly well acquainted with the limitations of surveying in Persia. I am also keen on the work, having long wished to travel over this part of south-west Persia. If Government will not grant the necessary financial assistance, I am still willing to carry out the survey, as long as I am put on duty at my present rate of pay for the period occupied by the investigation.

A. T. WILSON.

[39820]

No. 77.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 29.)*

(No. 761.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

SITUATION at Ardabil.

Please refer to my telegram No. 756 of the 23rd October.

I have received the following from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez, No. 203 of the 28th October:—

Instructions on the lines suggested in my No. 197 of the 22nd instant seem to have been sent to Russian consul-general, who has informed his vice-consul at Ardabil to warn Rahim Khan that the Russian Government will hold him personally responsible for the damage done to life and property of Russian subjects. Reshid-Ali-Malik, who has been sent to Sarab in command of 100 Persian Cossacks to parley with the rebels, has been entrusted with a warning in writing to the same effect for delivery to Rahim. In this latter message my Russian colleague added that he would hold him responsible, in addition, for harm caused by Shaseven tribesmen, whom he had, it was clear, incited to rebel. These threats should produce a salutary effect if they are brought to Rahim and are not counteracted, but it is not known where he is.

Some 1,500 infantry and cavalry have left Tabreez under Bagher Khan, but until the result of the negotiations is known they will probably be stationed a few miles on the other side of Busmich.

There is a force about 800 strong that can march when required from Maragha, under Saad Khan.

At Ardabil there are about 1,000 men under Sattar Khan. Reactionary element enters largely into composition of Government forces, whose allegiance, although now enlisted by governor-general to cause of new régime, may be doubtful if it is thought that rebellion is favoured by Russia. An appeal to arms under these conditions and in view of the strength of the rebels would be attended by risk. Russian consul-general, whom I consulted as to whether it would be possible to use our influence in the cause of law and order, is willing to take steps in this direction, but we agreed to wait until the result of the negotiations now in progress is known.

The troops that were sent from Tehran have all arrived here; they are composed of 200 Cossacks, and 200 Innaloo only. The remnant of the force which was supposed to be at Zanjium is not there. If it existed elsewhere than on paper it has dissolved into space.

Tehran, October 29, 1909.

[39703]

No. 78.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1320.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 29, 1909.*

AGENCY of the Société du Tombac et Bushire.

Please ask the Russian Government to send instructions to their Representative at Constantinople similar to those contained in my telegram to Mr. Marling, No. 686 of to-day's date.

[39703]

No. 79.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.*

(No. 686.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, October 29, 1909.*

AGENCY of Société du Tombac et Bushire.

In co-operation with your Russian colleague you should act, so far as is possible, in the sense of the instructions contained in Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 760 of yesterday's date.

[39434]

No. 80.

*Foreign Office to Anglo-Persian Oil Company.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, October 29, 1909.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 6th ultimo respecting the proposed topographical survey in West Persia, I am directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform you that the Government of India have now enquired what the extent of the work is likely to be, and on what scale the maps are to be constructed. They also wish to know for what period the services of the officer engaged on the survey will be required.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey will be glad to receive this information from you as soon as possible, in order that it may be communicated by telegraph to the Government of India.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS Mallet.

[39903]

No. 81.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 30.)*

Sir,

*India Office, October 29, 1909.*

IN reply to your letter dated the 8th October, 1909, enquiring as to the views of Viscount Morley on a proposed concession for the improvement of the communications between Bunder Abbas and Kerman, I am directed to observe that the proposal in question is in accordance with the statement made in the memorandum handed to M. Isvolsky on the 14th October, 1908, to the effect that His Majesty's Government considered a line from Bunder Abbas to Kerman to be among those that most closely concerned them. There is, therefore, in principle no objection to the scheme.

The trade prospects of the route would appear from the memorandum of the Board of Trade, printed as Appendix 8 to the Report of the Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, to be favourable, but the initiation of this or any similar project of the kind will presumably be regarded by those initiating it as dependent upon a satisfactory settlement of the question of affording increased security to the roads of Southern Persia. Lord Morley is accordingly disposed to agree that the support of His Majesty's Government should be given to the scheme, provided that the reply of the Board of Trade be satisfactory.

He considers, however, that it may be well in the first place to ascertain from the gentlemen supporting it whether they contemplate the levy of road tolls, and on what scale, in addition to ordinary charges for the actual carriage of goods.

[1684]

I am to add that a copy of this correspondence is being communicated to the Government of India for their observations.

I am, &c.  
R. RITCHIE.

[39951]

No. 82.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 30.)*

(No. 462.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, October 30, 1909.*

RUSSIAN troops at Kazvin.

I was told in confidence to-day by M. Isvolsky that the withdrawal of this force has been decided on in principle. The main body of the troops will be sent back to Russia, but the Russian Government propose to leave detachments at Enzeli and Resht, and only sixty Cosacks or so at Kazvin. M. Isvolsky informed me of this in confidence, but I dare say he will issue a communiqué on the subject to-morrow. M. Poklewsky is to convey this news to the Persian Government and to explain to them that Russia is thereby demonstrating her good-will towards Persia; but he is at the same time to warn them that if the Russian Government are compelled by any troubles arising to resort again to the despatch of a force, the measures taken will be of a more extensive and important character. M. Poklewsky is instructed also to avail himself of this opportunity for urging that some matters should be settled about which the two Governments have not yet reached an agreement, but he is not to link the two questions together in any way. M. Isvolsky trusts that the Persian Government may be advised by His Majesty's Minister to adopt a conciliatory and amenable attitude in regard to these outstanding questions, and he would be glad if Sir G. Barclay might be given instructions to this effect.

[39876]

No. 83.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 30.)*

(No. 763.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Tehran, October 30, 1909.*

YOUR telegram No. 473 of the 28th October.

Russian Minister tells me that there are 1,600 Russian troops [at] Kazvin. This does not include commissariat, &c.

There are at Tabreez according to Russian consul's estimate 1,100, and according to Russian Minister 1,000.

(Sent to St. Petersburg.)

[40161]

No. 81.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received November 1.)*

Sir,

*23, Oxford Street, Manchester, October 30, 1909.*

WE beg to inform you that we purpose shipping, on behalf of Messrs. Andrew Weir and Co., from the island of Ormuz, 1,000 tons red oxide of iron by the steam-ship "Guild Hall," belonging to the West Hartlepool Steam Navigation Company, loading to commence about the 10th proximo. We give you this information in view of a paragraph in Mr. Norman's letter to our Mr. Ellinger of the 3rd May last, which says that if the Nationalists or any one else but Messrs. Andrew Weir and Co. attempt to move any of the oxide Sir G. Barclay will at once hear of it and take the necessary action. You may therefore think it desirable to inform the authorities at Bunder Abbas of the intended shipment.

We are, &c.

ELLINGER AND CO.

[40214]

No. 85.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 1.)*

(No. 466.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*St. Petersburg, November 1, 1909.*

MY telegram No. 462 [of 30th October].

The fact of withdrawal of troops from Kazvin was published this morning.

[39951]

No. 86.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 475.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 1, 1909.*

PERFIA. See telegram No. 462 of the 30th October from St. Petersburg.

You are authorised to act in accordance with the last paragraph in the fullest sense.

[40275]

No. 87.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 2.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of correspondence relative to increased salutes for the Sheikhs of Mohammedrah, Koweit, and Bahrein.

*India Office, November 1, 1909.*

Inclosure 1 in No. 87.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Secret.)

My Lord,

*Sindia, September 30, 1909.*

IN compliance with the request contained in paragraph 3 of your Lordship's Secret despatch dated the 25th June, 1909, on the subject of the salutes to be accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammedrah, Koweit, and Bahrein, we have the honour to forward, for the information of His Majesty's Government, a copy of the correspondence, from which it will be seen that the new scale of salutes will come into force with effect from the 22nd September, 1909.

We have, &c.

MINTO.

O'M. CREAGH.

J. O. MILLER.

W. L. HARVEY.

S. P. SINIA.

H. H. RISLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 87.

*Government of India to Major Coz.*

(Confidential.)

*Sindia, July 26, 1909.*

WITH reference to your letter dated the 8th August, 1908, regarding the salutes accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammedrah, Koweit, and Bahrein, I am directed to inform you that His Majesty's Government approve the proposal to increase the salutes of the Sheikhs of Mohammedrah and Koweit from five to twelve guns, and that of the Sheikh of Bahrein from five to eleven, and to grant a salute of five guns to the eldest sons of the Sheikhs of Mohammedrah and Koweit, and of three guns to the eldest son of the Sheikh of Bahrein, on occasions when they visit one of His Majesty's ships as their father's representatives. The salutes will be fired, as in the case of the existing salutes to the sheikhs, on the termination of an official visit.

[1681]



2. I am to add that the increased salutes will in each case be personal to the present chiefs, and it should be explained to them that it is within the discretion of the Government of India to continue the salute or not to their successors. It is left to your discretion to decide when it would be opportune to make the announcement to the sheikhs concerned. It seems desirable that before doing so you should consult Sir G. Barclay as to how far the proposal to increase the salute of the Sheikh of Mohammedali is affected by the sheikh's position as a Persian subject.

3. I am to request that the Government of India may be furnished in due course with a report of your proceedings, as the Admiralty desire to be informed officially of the date when the arrangements come into force. The naval commander-in-chief, East Indies squadron, has, however, been directed to instruct the commanding officers of His Majesty's ships in the Persian Gulf to act on the above scale of salutes when instructed to do so by you.

Inclosure 3 in No. 87.

Major Cox to Government of India.

*Bushire, August 22, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to refer to the correspondence ending with your letter dated the 26th July, 1909, on the subject of the salutes to be accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammedali, Koweit, and Bahrain.

2. I think it will be as well that I should make this further reference to Government as to the precise steps to be taken to inform the three sheikhs severally of the decision at which His Majesty's Government have been pleased to arrive, as slightly different procedure seems to me to be advisable in each case.

3. The Sheikh of Koweit might, I suggest, be informed officially in writing by the resident that, in view of our friendly relations and as a personal compliment, His Majesty's Government have been pleased to issue instructions that when he visits one of His Majesty's ships a salute of twelve guns will in future be fired in his honour on his leaving the ship, and that five guns will be fired for his son when visiting a ship on his father's behalf. It would be added, in conclusion, that the Government of India reserved discretion to continue the salute or not in the case of his successors.

4. The present Sheikh of Mohammedali has, I believe, never called upon a British man-of-war. For prudential reasons he prefers to exchange visits at the consulate. Consequently he is probably not sure what salute would be given him if he did. Moreover, at times he is acting as Governor-General of Arabistan, in which capacity he would *ex-officio* get seventeen guns. I am of opinion that in his case it would be sufficient for His Majesty's consul to inform him verbally that a salute of twelve guns has been prescribed for Sheikh Mubarak and a similar salute will be fired for him personally when, as Sheikh of Mohammedali, he visits a British man-of-war, and five guns for his son when representing him. He would also be informed of the discretion reserved to themselves by the Government in the case of the sheikh's successors.

In this regard I attach copies of the telegrams exchanged between myself and His Majesty's Minister, from which it will be seen that his concurrence has been obtained.

5. In the case of the Sheikh of Bahrain, the enhancement of the salute might be made somewhat more of in the intimation sent him by the residency. It might be explained to him that it is in view of his long period of rule over Bahrain, and with the wish to add to his personal dignity among his compatriots, that His Majesty's Government, on the recommendation of the Government of India, have been pleased, &c.

6. If the Government of India generally approve of the procedure suggested for each case in the foregoing paragraphs, I beg that the enhanced salutes may be considered to come into force without further reference, on our receipt of their reply; on which the necessary communications will be made to the sheikhs concerned and the senior naval officer, Persian Gulf division.

Inclosure 4 in No. 87.

Major Cox to Sir G. Barclay.

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Bushire, August 15, 1909.*

UP to the present time salutes of five guns have been accorded to the Sheikhs of Koweit, Mohammedali, and Bahrain when visiting British men-of-war. Now, however, British political officers entitled to salutes of eleven guns having been appointed to Koweit and Bahrain, it has been considered expedient to raise the personal salute of the former to twelve and of the latter to eleven guns. A proposal has also been made to grant Sheikh Khazal a personal salute of twelve guns, and his eldest son, when representing his father, five guns.

Do you see any objection? When the Sardar Arfa is acting Governor-General of Arabistan he would of course receive the salute due to that rank. The settlement of the question of the salute at Mohammedali is actually only a formality, as the sheikh seldom ever visits a man-of-war, but prefers to exchange visits at the consulate. I venture in consequence to suggest that it is only necessary for you to accord your personal approval of the proposal, and that there is no need to approach the Persian Government on the subject.

Inclosure 5 in No. 87.

Sir G. Barclay to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, August 17, 1909.*

WITH reference to your telegram dated the 15th instant, I concur with you in considering that no reference to the Persian Government is necessary, and to the proposed salute I have no objection.

Inclosure 6 in No. 87.

Government of India to Major Trevor.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

*Simla, September 22, 1909.*

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of Major Cox's letter, dated the 22nd August, 1909, on the subject of the salutes to be accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammedali, Koweit, and Bahrain.

2. In reply, I am to inform you that the Government of India approve Major Cox's proposals.

3. The new scale of salutes will come into force with effect from the date of these orders.

I have, &c.

S. H. BUTLER,  
Secretary to the Government of India.

Inclosure 7 in No. 87.

India Office to Admiralty.

Sir,

*India Office, October 28, 1909.*

WITH reference to your letter dated the 10th June, 1909, as to the salutes to be accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammedali, Koweit, and Bahrain, I am directed to enclose, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copy of a letter from the Government of India, from which it will be seen that the new scale of salutes has been brought into force with effect from the 22nd September, 1909.

A copy of this letter is being communicated to the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.

R. RITCHIE.

[40336]

No. 88.

*Anglo-Persian Oil Company to Foreign Office.—(Received November 2.)**Winchester House, Old Broad Street,  
London, November 1, 1909.*

Sir,  
I BEG to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 29th ultimo, advising that the Government of India have enquired (1) what the extent of the work is likely to be; (2) on what scale the maps are to be constructed; and (3) the period for which the services of the officer engaged on the survey will be required.

A telegram making the same enquiries was received by us from Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co. on the 26th ultimo, and in reply thereto we wired to them:—

"Probably 500 square miles; 6 inches mile; probably two years."

Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co.'s telegram was doubtless sent in connection with an enquiry received by them from the Government of India, and the reply we sent has presumably been passed on to Simla. As, however, you will no doubt consider it desirable to reply to the Government of India's telegram direct, the above message to Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co. will afford the information required for your reply.

I am, &c.

C. GREENWAY, Director.

[40382]

No. 89.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)*

(No. 467.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*St. Petersburg, November 2, 1909.*

[AGENCY of Société du Tonkin at Bushire.]

Telegram No. 1320 [of the 29th October] and Tehran telegram No. 760 [of the 28th October].

Russian Government have sent instructions to Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to support steps which His Majesty's Ambassador may take.

[40387]

No. 90.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 2.)*

(No. 764.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

NAVIGATION of Lake Urmia.

*Tehran, November 2, 1909.*

Please refer to my telegram No. 758 of the 24th October. I am informed by His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez that a meeting took place there between the two consuls and Stevens. The latter proposed the payment of 5,000*l.* in a single instalment, or an engagement for five years as manager, with a salary of 1,100*l.* yearly, as alternative conditions under which he would release Innan Kuli from certain obligations contracted towards him, and which at present make it impossible for Innan Kuli to accept the proposals of the Road Company.

His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez telegraphs as follows:—

"It will be bad policy on the part of the Road Company not to engage Stevens. He can be of use to them in the first difficult period, and at the expiration of the five years they need not extend his engagement. Even if they adopt the first alternative, and secure the consent of Innan Kuli by handing over to Stevens a lump sum, they will find difficulty in dealing with the former, with the Persians, and with the authorities whom the co-operation of Stevens, and his popularity locally, would conciliate. Russian consul-general has all along been of this opinion, but the Road Company and St. Petersburg seem to oppose it."

M. Poklewski, to whom I communicated substance of above paragraph, will, I think, urge the acceptance of second alternative at St. Petersburg.

[39951]

No. 91.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1323.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 2, 1909.*

THE news contained in your telegram of the 30th October has given us the very greatest satisfaction. The best possible impression will be produced here with regard to the wisdom and harmony which characterise the policy of England and Russia in Persia when it is announced that such a substantial withdrawal of forces has taken place.

Our co-operation shall be unsparringly used at Tehran to secure by every diplomatic means that no results prejudicial to Russian interests shall arise from the withdrawal of these troops, and that the Government of the Shah shall act in a friendly spirit in return for the mark of confidence which has been shown them.

[40491]

No. 92.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 3.)*

(No. 468.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 3, 1909.*

SITUATION at Ardebil.

I was told last night by M. Isvolsky that, in order to more easily afford Russian subjects protection, the Russian consul at Ardebil had desired to assemble them all, but that they were being prevented from leaving their houses by the Shahsevens. As Russian subjects seemed to be in very great danger, instructions had been sent to the Viceroy of the Caucasus to dispatch whatever troops he had available at once to Ardebil. M. Isvolsky, however, expressed his fears lest these reinforcements might reach their destination too late. His Excellency added that, as the Shahsevens were pursuing Sattar Khan, who had fled to Sareh, a body of Russian cossacks from Tabreez had been hurriedly sent to protect the Russian consulate at that place.

His Excellency observed that the decision of the Russian Government as to the withdrawal of troops from Kazvin would not be affected by the above measures.

[40492]

No. 93.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 3.)*

(No. 470.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 3, 1909.*

PLEASE see my telegram No. 463 of this morning; Situation at Ardebil.

My above-mentioned telegram was not quite correct.

The Russian subjects were not being kept in their houses by the Shahsevens but by the inhabitants, who had fled to the Russians for refuge, and considering that the latter were some protection against the Shahsevens, were afraid to let them leave.

According to a telegram which M. Isvolsky has received from the Russian Minister at Tehran, the Shahsevens are in occupation of Ardebil. No details are, however, to hand.

[40493]

No. 94.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 3.)*

(No. 471.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 3, 1909.*

TABREEZ telegram No. 206 repeated in Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 766 [of to-day]; Situation at Ardebil.

In an interview which I had with M. Isvolsky to-day his Excellency told me that he feared that the Russian Government might be compelled to dispatch a strong force to Ardebil. The close proximity of this town to the Russian frontier makes it difficult for Russia to tolerate a state of anarchy there which seems likely to continue; it also appears that Russian subjects are in danger. There are obvious reasons which make M. Isvolsky very unwilling to embark on an expedition of this nature, but Rahim Khan

[1684]

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and his followers would be effectively suppressed if a force were sent. It would really benefit the Persian Government that the rising should be quelled if it is in any sense of the word a counter-revolution. His Excellency makes light of the idea that the situation could be effectively coped with by Persian troops.

I cannot imagine what object the Russian Government could have in encouraging these troubles, and, as far as I can judge, the action of Rahim Khan and of his followers receives the strongest condemnation here.

[40460]

No. 95.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 3.)*

(No. 765.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 3, 1909.*

YESTERDAY Ala-oes-Sultaneh and the Minister of Finance called and begged me very earnestly to use my influence to induce the Imperial Bank of Persia to make an advance of 300,000 tomas to 500,000 tomas on the security of Crown jewels, which the acting manager had declined to do. These funds were necessary for the campaign at Ardabil, and would be payable in instalments. To meet the expenses of the troops Mukhiber-oes-Sultaneh was in immediate need of 50,000 tomas, without which it would be impossible to continue the operations. Later a further advance of 500,000, subject to the sanction of the Medjliss, and eventually a substantial loan would, Ministers added, be required by the Persian Government. It was by order of the Cabinet and of the deputies in Tehran assembled in extraordinary council that the two Ministers made this statement.

In reply, I stated that the pledging of the jewels was a matter of purely commercial aspect, and one in which I was unable to advise the manager to act contrary to his judgment. I promised, however, to ask him for the reasons of his refusal. With regard to the advance of 500,000, and the eventual loan, for which the approval of the Medjliss is required, until that body had been convened it appeared premature to discuss the question.

I am informed by acting manager that he cannot make an advance on the jewels as there is no means of appraising their value at his disposal.

The position at Ardabil, where Rahim Khan has, it is believed, given out that he is fighting for the cause of Mohamed Ali, is clearly causing great anxiety to the Persian Government, and their resources seem to have been entirely exhausted by the reinforcements they have sent—1,500 Cossacks, Bakhtiari, and fedai, with four guns and two Maxim.

M. Poklewski, to whom the Ministers subsequently went, is communicating with St. Petersburg.

Ardabil may possibly have fallen before any advance could have been arranged, but if Rahim Khan's operations were to assume the character of an attempt to overthrow the present régime the two Governments might see their way to facilitate a small advance on the part of the banks rather than witness a recurrence of past confusion.

[40472]

No. 96.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 3.)*

(No. 766.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 3, 1909.*

POSITION in Eastern Azerbaijan.

I have received the following telegram from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez, No. 206 of the 2nd November:—

"News has reached Tabreez that Sattar Khan has made good his escape from Ardabil, and in company with a few horsemen has arrived at Sarab.

"My Russian colleague received a telegram three days ago from Russian vice-consul at Ardabil, informing him that the town would soon be in the hands of the rebels; that he had been implored by the name of humanity to send for a Russian force by the chief fedais, who told him that their ammunition was spent, and that he could not answer for the safety of Russian subjects if the vice-consulate were attacked by the alarmed population.

"Some Russian troops may, I fear, be dispatched to Ardabil, for this message, which was delayed, was redirected to St. Petersburg, to Tiflis, and to Tehran.

"To-day forty-two Russian Cossacks, accompanied by one officer, are being sent to Sarab at the request of Russian consular agent, who telegraphed that the town was being threatened by rebels. If twelve are considered by officer to be sufficient protection for local consular agent and for the few Russians there, thirty will be sent back immediately.

"It is thought that Ardabil must have been taken by now, and local authorities are very dependent. The current belief that rebels are being favoured by Russians handicaps the position of the Government, while the forces at their disposal are either of indifferent fighting capacity or of doubtful allegiance. The Persian Government should, if possible, dispatch from Tehran without delay a powerful expedition under an efficient leader. Some troops, I understand, are already en route from the capital.

"Russian consul-general is, I fear, endeavouring to bring Russian troops to Ardabil. Last month he asked that an expedition might be sent to punish the Shahsevens, but the military authorities would not consent on account of the approach of winter. He informed me that the present crisis would be most adequately solved by such punitive operations sanctioned by the two Governments. I stated that it would be simpler to make the rebels clearly understand that we viewed their action with disfavour. In reply, he gave me earnest assurances that very strong warnings, pointing out that we emphatically disapproved of his attitude, had been sent to Rahim Khan.

"It is difficult to see clear in the situation, and I do not think that we can do much here until it has developed. A natural solution may be brought about by the approach of winter."

[40476]

No. 97.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 3.)*

(No. 767.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 3, 1909.*

SHEIKH of Mohammureh. Foreign Office telegram No. 396 of 23rd July.

The sheikh is being pressed by Sardar Assad to submit a copy of the Abadan agreement to the Persian Government. He has asked for an undertaking that we will keep it secret.

It is commonly known that the agreement exists, and the Indian press has noticed it.

His Majesty's acting consul has asked how he should advise sheikh, and, after consulting with Major Cox, I have telegraphed reminding him that obligation of secrecy was only required by sheikh until events had quieted down in the capital, and instructing him to advise sheikh to communicate the agreement to the Persian Government, unless he has special reasons for not doing so.

[40517]

No. 98.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 4.)*

Sir,

*India Office, November 3, 1909.*

IN reply to your letter dated the 5th October, 1909, I am directed to inform you that the Secretary of State for India in Council has now sanctioned as a charge against Indian revenues a moiety of a sum of 20l. a month, for a period not exceeding live months, in respect of the escort of four sowars for Lieutenant A. T. Wilson while carrying out a survey in connection with the Kherkha irrigation scheme.

The sanction has been given on the understanding that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury will accept the other moiety as a charge against British revenues.

The Government of India will be asked to state whether they anticipate that there will be any expenditure in connection with the survey other than that involved in the retention of the four sowars.

I am, &amp;c.

R. RITCHIE.

[40580]

No. 99.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 4.)*

(No. 768.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 4, 1909.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 765 of the 3rd November, I am informed that Imperial Bank of Persia have applied for authority to their head office to advance up to 50 per cent. *ad valorem* on the Crown jewels; value to be appraised by three delegates of Persian Government and three delegates of the bank in committee.

There is an expert attached to the Russian bank, and doubtless they would allow him to act after consultation with my Russian colleague.

[40460]

No. 100.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1324.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 4, 1909.*

LOAN to Persian Government (see telegrams from Tehra Nos. 765 and 766 of the 3rd November).

You should ask Russian Government for their views on this question, and enquire of them whether, if the Imperial Bank felt justified in advancing, on the security of the Crown jewels, a sum of, say, 200,000 tomanis, they would be willing to authorise the Russian Bank to ship in such an advance. Although I know that in September they did not object to the idea of advancing something on this same security, I have not yet approached them in the matter, but on learning the views of the Russian Government I would do so.

[40461]

No. 101.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 479.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 4, 1909.*

SHIPMENT of Hormuz oxide.

Sillinger informs us that his firm intend to ship in steamship "Guildhall" from Hormuz with 1,000 to 2,000 tons of oxide. They propose to begin the shipment about the 10th November. If necessary you should net us on the previous occasion, dealt with in my telegram No. 426 of the 19th August.

[40692]

No. 102.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 5.)*

(No. 472.)

(Telegraphic.) Decode.

*St. Petersburg, November 5, 1909.*

"ROSSIA" publishes following official communiqué to-day:—

"According to latest information from Ardebil, local governor, members of Anjuman, and clergy have taken refuge in Russian vice-consulate, and immediately afterwards town was occupied by Shahsevens and Karadaghias. All bazaars, caravan sheds, and most of the houses have been looted. Shahsevens have demanded of the vice-consul surrender to them of three persons who have taken up their quarters in consulate compound. It is feared that consulate may be subjected to an attack by these nomads, and that small consulate guard, consisting of one sotnia of Cossacks, will not be able to withstand an assault. In view of such circumstances, in addition to these one battalion of infantry, two sotnia of Cossacks, with two guns and detachment of engineers, have been sent to Ardebil already; another column of sufficient strength is being dispatched thither in order, should occasion arise, to take decisive action against these nomads."

[40695]

No. 103.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 5.)*

(No. 473.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 5, 1909.*

YOUR telegram No. 1324 of the 4th instant.

I saw M. Isvolsky to-day and spoke to him on the subject of an advance to the Persian Government. He said that the Acting Minister of Finance and himself were already in communication on the subject, and as soon as a decision was come to he promised to let me know.

[40696]

No. 104.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 5.)*

(No. 474.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 5, 1909.*

SITUATION at Ardebil.

I was informed to-day by M. Isvolsky that he felt the greatest anxiety about the safety of the Russian consul and other Russians at Ardebil. The Shahsevens were demanding the surrender of the governor, mullahs, and other persons who had taken bast in the consulate. It was impossible to foresee what the consequences of this might be, as he was sure the consul would not comply with this demand. A telegram dated two days ago was the last which had been received from the consul. If a serious attack were made on the consulate, the sotnia of Cossacks at present at Ardebil would be quite insufficient to protect it. There were 60 kilon. from Astara to-morrow. The Shahsevens had not carried out the engagements to which they had subscribed on account of various misdeeds, including the death of a Russian officer, and a severe punishment would be inflicted on them when a sufficiently large Russian force arrived.

M. Isvolsky said that if anything happened to the consul or to Russian subjects he would be severely blamed for temporising, a policy which was already being ascribed to English influence in some of the newspapers. The Russian Government, in my opinion, have but one course left open to them, and that is to dispatch a force strong enough to suppress Rahim Khan's people and the Shahsevens; and to discourage any steps which they consider essential for the restoration of tranquillity on their frontier and for the protection of their subjects would, it seems to me, be unwise.

M. Isvolsky reiterated his opinion that efforts to quell the disturbances on the part of the Persian Government would be futile; and he added that the punishment of the Shahsevens and Rahim Khan by the Russians would be to the advantage of the Persian Government if these men, who were mere brigands, were dignifying their depredations under a pretence that their action was a political movement against the new régime.

[40690]

No. 105.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 5.)*

(No. 770.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 5, 1909.*

ARDEBIL.

I have received the following telegram from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez:—

"Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has telegraphed to my Russian colleague stating that it has been decided to increase the consular escort at Ardebil, and that the question of dispatching troops there is being discussed.

"A most unfortunate impression would be caused if a force is sent, as it is generally believed that rebels have been incited by Russians. At Ardebil, besides, Russian military operations would be under no control, for the restraining influence of a representative, which has to be counted with in Tabreez, would be removed."

[1684]

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I told M. Poklewski that I thought the dispatch of troops, as distinct from a force sent substantially to reinforce the consular escort, would be unfortunate, and I endeavoured to induce him to discourage such a step, but he prefers to leave the question to his Government for independent decision.

[40897]

No. 106.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 5.)*

(No. 771.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 5, 1909.

ARDEBIL.  
His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez telegraphs as follows:—

"Ardebil has been occupied and plundered by shahsevens. Russian vice-consulate besieged by the rebels, who demand surrender of certain bastis. Governor, Anjuann, and part of crowd have taken refuge there. Russian vice-consul implores immediate assistance.

"It seems inevitable that Russian troops will be sent. Sattar Khan has arrived in Tahreez."

[40876]

No. 107.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 6.)*

(No. 772.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 6, 1909.

POLICING of southern roads.

After consideration of means to maintain security on the Bushire-Isfahan road, Major Cox and I would recommend the following scheme:—

The road to be retolled in sections by a force of 600 roadguards raised locally, superintended and organized by six officers, seconded by the Indo-European Telegraph Department. In addition certain khans between Bushire and Shiraz to be subsidized, and we recommend that 13,000*l.* per annum be met by an additional tax, at the Persian ports in the Gulf, of 10 per cent. on import and export duties for a given period, e.g., three years. Total cost of scheme ought not to exceed this sum.

I should be glad to hear whether proposal meets with your general approval before Wednesday next, when Major Cox is leaving Tehran.

The main objection to the employment of officers of the Indo-European Telegraph Department under Bell's scheme would, in Barker's opinion, be removed in the modified form now under consideration.

If the proposal is accepted by His Majesty's Government, I presume that they will ascertain whether the Russian Government would raise any difficulty before I take action here.

Russia is the only foreign Power, as we understand it, who has the right to do so in the case of the surcharge, but her imports are so insignificant in the Gulf ports, that she should not make any objection.

As it may be presumed that the illegal dues that are now levied and the present increased rates for transport will cease, there appears to be no ground for discount on the part of our trade.

The road guards would be subject not to the Minister of War, but to the Minister of the Interior. Russia would, I think, view with less suspicion assistance given by us to the latter than to the former department, and it would probably be less calculated to induce her to profit by our measure in order to take similar steps in the north of Persia.

When the moment arrives, I would propose to inform the Persian Government that order must be restored on the road, to inquire what are their proposals, and to tell them that we shall lay a scheme before them unless they can give us satisfaction. I propose simultaneously to make known our scheme informally, and unofficially to press them to solicit our co-operation on the lines proposed. By this means we should not appear to be forcing our assistance on the Persian Government, any indication of which in the Medjless would provoke resentment.

[39194]

No. 108.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 152.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 6, 1909.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 182 of the 1st ultimo respecting the attitude of the Bakhtiari chiefs towards His Majesty's Government, and I approve the action which you proposed to take in reminding the Sardar Assud and the Sardar Amutsham of the friendly messages conveyed to them last year.

His Majesty's Government consider that it is important to retain the friendship of the Khans, and you should not cease to watch their disposition in this matter carefully.

I am, &amp;c.

E. GREY.

[40882]

No. 109.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 571.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 25, 1909.*

I ASKED M. Sazonow to-day what was his news from Ardebil. He said that it was very bad, and that Sattar Khan was in such straits that he was contemplating seeking Russian protection, which would be a curious result after his former attitude. M. Sazonow added that the Russian Government could not send any troops to Ardebil, as fifteen days would elapse before they could arrive. They had therefore informed the Persian Government that they would hold them responsible for any losses or damages which might be caused by the refractory tribes. He observed that throwing the responsibility for possible events on the Persian Government was perhaps an empty form, but it was the only course to take in the circumstances. I said that I understood that the Persian Government were dispatching a force to relieve Ardebil. He replied that he was aware of this, but he did not anticipate that the Persian troops would be able to effect anything. I asked whether the Russian authorities could not speak words of wisdom to Rahim Khan and induce him to cease from his depredations. M. Sazonow replied that the Russian doctor who had been treating Rahim Khan had insisted on his remaining perfectly tranquil, but that the latter would not listen to any advice, and had started off to head his marauding hands. M. Sazonow said that his latest news was that the Shahsevens and the Karadaghis were quarrelling between each other, and possibly this would be of advantage in relieving the situation. M. Sazonow added that he trusted no Russian lives would be lost, as then the Russian Government would have to take very serious notice of such an occurrence. Property pillaged or damaged could always be compensated, but if lives were lost the matter assumed a very different aspect.

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

[40883]

No. 110.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 572.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 25, 1909.*

I TOLD M. Sazonow that I had heard that some Germans were negotiating with Innam Kuli with respect to the Urmia navigation scheme, and it seemed to me that it behoved the Russians to endeavour to come to terms as speedily as possible with the Persian concessionaire and thus forestall the Germans. M. Sazonow said that M. Poklewski had been told to be very watchful, and would no doubt take the necessary steps in the matter. He added that the Russian Government believed that their transport concession, which had still fifty-five years to run, might be interpreted as blocking any other concession for transport, and that it might be applied to the case of the Urmia navigation. He admitted that the concession of Innam Kuli was prior to that of the Russians. I observed that I doubted if in that case his argument would hold, and that Innam Kuli was not seeking to part with his concession, but was endeavouring to obtain some partnership to work it with him. M. Sazonow said that he understood this, and that the Russians would do their utmost to come to terms with

Inam Kuli. If they failed, the Russian Government could always prevent the import into Persia of the necessary matériel, and thus render the concession valueless. I remarked that such a proceeding would be rather arbitrary, and might give rise to complications. Moreover, perhaps the matériel could be imported by a route other than through Russian territory. He said that this would not be possible. I pointed out to M. Sazonow that I feared that the activity of the Germans might not remain limited to the concession which we were discussing, but might be extended to other spheres. For instance, in the financial straits of the Persian Government the latter might apply to Germany for funds. M. Sazonow replied that this would be contrary to the formal declaration made by Count Quadt, he thought last year, that Germany or the German Bank would not furnish financial assistance to Persia. I said that I did not recall such a declaration, but, even if it had been made, it did not preclude the Persian Government from applying to German financiers other than the bank. M. Sazonow said that he was fully alive to the dangers of German activity, but that he was sure that M. Poklewsky would be very watchful. I said that I did not doubt for a moment that he would be, but, to my mind, the endeavours of the Germans to get their hand into Persia should, if possible, be frustrated.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[40884]

No. 111.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received November 8.)

(No. 573.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 25, 1909.*

THE Persian Minister, Isak Khan, called on me this evening. He told me that he believed that he was transferred to the legation at Reno. He said it would be a quiet post, and out of the turmoil of Anglo-Russian-Persian politics. I asked him why he had been transferred. He said that the present Persian Government considered that he was too Russophil. I remarked that even if he were it could hardly be considered an offence. He said that he was charged with having been the means of inducing the Russian Government to dispatch troops to Tabreez. I told him that this charge would not hold water, as the reasons which had led the Russian Government to send a force to Tabreez were sufficiently well known. He said that he was also accused of having suggested to the Russian Government to arrest at Tiflis a brother of Taki Zadeh, while he had known nothing of the matter until the arrest had occurred, and that he had used his utmost endeavours to procure the man's deportation to Persia, which he had eventually succeeded in obtaining. I asked him whether he had any news of interest from Tehran. He said that he feared that the new Medjliss would be very much like the first, with the difference that the mullahs would have no influence at all. The extreme parties would be in the majority, and would, he feared, commit many foolish acts. The Nasr-ul-Mulk, he said, should be now in Tehran, but he doubted if he would have the strength of purpose to master the situation, and that the whole Government would be under the extreme parties largely influenced by the Cumanian revolutionaries. He was sorry to hear from his friends that an anti-English feeling was being promoted among the deputies, and, though it had not made much headway at present, he feared that it might grow, especially as some were advocating that an understanding should be arrived at with Germany. It was considered, he was told, that Germany alone was able to induce the Russian Government to withdraw their troops from Persia, and that if advances were made to Germany she might be persuaded to put pressure on St. Petersburg with the above object.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[40891]

No. 112.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received November 8.)

(No. 584.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, October 31, 1909.*

I ASKED M. Isvolsky yesterday whether he had received any recent news from Ardabil. He replied that affairs were most unsettled there, but that there were about 100 Cossacks in the town who would, he hoped, be able to protect the lives of the

consul and other Russian subjects, but they were hardly sufficiently numerous to safeguard the property of the latter. I remarked that the Persian Government were hastening up troops to relieve the situation. M. Isvolsky was incredulous as to the Persian forces being able to afford any material assistance; and he informed me that he had made the Persian Government responsible for all losses and injury which might occur to Russian subjects.

His Excellency said that the mixed council or committee who dealt with Persian affairs had come to the decision in principle to withdraw practically all the troops from Kazvin, leaving merely fifty or sixty Cossacks there as a consular guard. Other Cossack detachments would be left at Resht and Enzeli, but the total number of all these three contingents would not exceed a regiment of Cossacks. The rest of the troops would be brought back to Russia. He was telegraphing to M. Poklewsky to inform the Persian Government of this decision, and to explain that they would doubtless see in it a sign of the good-will of Russia and of her desire not to cause any embarrassment to the Shah's Government. At the same time, M. Poklewsky was to warn the Persian Government that if in the future events were to occur which would compel the Russian Government to send troops back to Persia, the measures which would then be taken would be on a larger scale and of more serious import than was recently the case.

M. Poklewsky was also to induce the Persian Government to take the present opportunity of settling certain questions outstanding between the two Governments. He was not to make the departure of the troops conditional on the settlement of these questions, or in any way to link the two matters together; but, as Russia was giving a very evident sign of her good-will and conciliatory disposition, the Persian Government should show some reciprocity. He would, he said, be glad if His Majesty's Government would instruct Sir G. Barclay to co-operate with his Russian colleague, and to advise the Persian Government to be amenable and conciliatory.

I said that I was quite sure that His Majesty's Government would do what was possible in facilitating a good understanding between the Russian and Persian Governments.

M. Isvolsky remarked that he would very shortly publish the measure on which the Russian Government had decided, and he expected to be the object of attacks in the press for his undue deference towards British wishes and for his weak defence of Russian interests.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

P.S. November 1.—The following article has appeared to-day officially in the "Recl":—

"The Imperial Government, deeming it unnecessary under present conditions to maintain in Kazvin any longer the column dispatched thither in June last, have decided to recall to Russia the greater part of that force, retaining in Persia only the Labinsky Cossack Regiment, which forms part of the column. Half a garrison of this regiment will remain at Kazvin as a guard to the Russian consulate in that town, and the remaining portion of the regiment will be quartered in Resht or Enzeli, in order to strengthen the consular guard there.

"Should the future course of events again necessitate the reinforcement of this military force, the Russian Government will not delay in taking the necessary measures."

A. N.

[40893]

No. 113.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received November 8.)

(No. 586.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 2, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit copy of an *aide-mémoire* which I gave M. Isvolsky in regard to the question of the agency of the Société du Tombac in the Gulf ports, based on Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 760. I am afraid that my knowledge of the question is a little hazy, as I have not the memorandum mentioned in the telegram from Basrah, but I trust that my *aide-mémoire* correctly gives the substance of what

is required, and that the reply of the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, copy of which is enclosed, adequately meets the wishes of His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 113.

*Aide-mémoire communicated to M. Izvolsky by Sir A. Nicolson.*

LE Ministère Impérial a sans doute reçu du Ministère de l'Affaire de la Russie à Téhéran certaines explications au sujet de la prochaine expiration du contrat dévolu aux bateaux russes de la part de la Société du Tombac à Constantinople. Il paraît désirable que les deux Gouvernements tâchent d'éviter que le dit contrat passe entre les mains de tierces personnes, et que les deux ambassades à Constantinople soient munies d'instructions de faire les démarches qui leur paraissent les plus aptes afin de garder le contrat ou dans les mains des détenteurs actuels ou de le faire transférer à des compagnies anglaises. Dans ce cas le Gouvernement britannique propose que l'Ambassadeur russe à Constantinople fasse son possible de faire renouveler le contrat de l'Agence russe et que l'Ambassadeur britannique tâche d'acquiescer le contrat pour une agence anglaise dans le cas où le renouvellement précité n'aura pas lieu.

Des instructions ont été envoyées à Sir G. Lowther de coopérer avec son collègue de Russie dans le sens susindiqué, et l'Ambassade britannique se permet de proposer au Ministère Impérial d'envoyer de pareilles instructions à M. Tcharykoff.

*Saint-Petersbourg, le 17 (30) octobre, 1909.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 113.

*Aide-mémoire communicated to Sir A. Nicolson by M. Izvolsky.*

AYANT été saisi par son Ministre à Téhéran de l'affaire de la Société du Tombac à Constantinople, mentionnée dans l'aide-mémoire de l'Ambassade de la Grande-Bretagne en date du 17 (30) octobre courant, le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères n'a pas manqué d'inviter par télégraphe l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Constantinople d'appuyer les démarches de son collègue britannique par rapport à la dite affaire.

*Saint-Petersbourg, le 19 octobre  
(1<sup>er</sup> novembre), 1909.*

[40894]

No. 114.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 587.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 2, 1909.*

DESPITE the apprehensions of M. Izvolsky, the Russian press, so far as it has noticed the subject, has received the news of the withdrawal of Russian troops from Kazvin with equanimity. To take two extremes, the "Novoe Vremya" and the "Bourse Gazette." The former journal relates the incidents and causes which led up to the dispatch of Russian troops, and states that the presence of the Russian troops has been beneficial to Persia and the Persians. By withdrawing the troops from the interior of the country, and merely stationing a regiment of Cossacks on the Caspian littoral, the Russian Government have given a proof of the scrupulous manner in which they observe conventions and even unilateral promises. A European country, neighbouring to Russia, having, on the mandate of Europe, occupied two provinces for the restoration of law and order, ended by annexing them, notwithstanding the protests of their inhabitants. Russia having restored tranquillity in a country quits it of her own accord, upon her own initiative and with the general regret of the population. The "Novoe Vremya" presumes that no amount of subtlety will extinguish this difference of political morality. By a withdrawal of her troops Russia has given to Persia a proof of the genuineness of her friendship; and by quitting Persia on the first possible occasion she has shown her confidence in the capability of the Persian

Government to grapple with the situation with her own resources. The Nationalists, who so recently suspected Russia of aggressive designs, now receive at her hands a pacified region, while other portions of Persia, which do not concern Russia, are still in a hopeless state of unrest. Whether the Nationalists will give Russia credit for her action the near future will show. The Russian troops carried out duties appertaining to the Persian Government, who were not in a position to protect foreigners, and by their protection of commerce they saved the local population from ruin. The question of compensation to Russia for the expenses which she incurred naturally came to one's mind, but apparently no one is raising the point. The "Novoe Vremya" presumes that the Russian Government acted on the reports of their agents that comparative order had been restored, and that there was a possibility of the Persian Government maintaining order without assistance. The diplomatic agents have not always judged the situation accurately, and the journal expresses the hope that the Government have verified their reports. The Government evidently foresee the possibility of a recrudescence of trouble, which would necessitate the dispatch of another column. If such an event were to occur it would then be shown that the Government had been too optimistic, and had not properly judged the conditions of the existing situation.

The "Bourse Gazette" says that the announcement of the withdrawal of the Russian troops will be read in Russia and abroad with complete satisfaction. The step would have been received with equal satisfaction in Persia if the Russian Government had not added that, in case of necessity, reinforcements would be dispatched. This portion of the announcement is infelicitous, as Persia will feel that there is a class master at her side, and the new Government and the Medjliss may regard the latter part of the communiqué as a threat.

Meanwhile, it may be supposed that Russia will not abandon her interests and the protection of her subjects in Persia. It can scarcely be doubted that the dispatch of the troops was not an urgent necessity, and it is scarcely likely that a similar necessity will arise in the future unless a counter-revolution takes place in Persia similar to that which occurred in Turkey against national freedom. But even in that case Russia would not stand on the side of the enemies of the Persian people.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[40898]

No. 115.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 593.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 3, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the "Official Messenger" to-day publishes the following communiqué in regard to the situation at Ardabil:

Taking advantage of the unrest and total collapse of authority in Persia, the restless elements of the notorious tribe of Shubsevan, wandering near the Caucasian frontier, have of late repeatedly made raids into the Persian district of Ardabil, adjacent to the Caucasus. In the summer of this year they advanced close to the town of Ardabil, and for some time caused a complete cessation of goods traffic along the Astar-Ardabil-Tabreez road by their brigandage and pillaging; and in consequence of this an enormous accumulation of our merchandise, destined for the internal markets of Persia, was formed at the port of Astrakhan.

Owing to the measures adopted by our consulates at Tabreez and Ardabil, at the end of August (o.s.) several caravans, with the goods which had accumulated, succeeded in passing along the route specified, under escort of Russian Cossacks. At the same time the Shubsevan commenced to move off towards their encampments.

However, as early as the beginning of October (o.s.), rumours arose of a fresh expedition of these nomads into Ardabil; and, further, this raid acquired a certain political character through the co-operation of the Karalaghis, under the leadership of Rhythm Khan, who is known in connection with the siege of Tabreez. The Shubsevan and Karalaghis were ostensibly advancing in defence of Mohammed Ali, the dethroned Shah, and with the intention of abolishing the Persian Constitution. In view of the alarm which was raised in Ardabil, the governor-general of Azerbaijan, ordered the well-known Sattar Khan to proceed from Tabreez to Ardabil with a column of his faithfuls. He was at the same time instructed to restore order in Ardabil and to take



measures for curbing the license of the local fedais, who for the most part come from the Caucasus. Upon his arrival at this town, Sattar first of all attempted to disarm and banish from the town all Caucasians, but this attempt met with no success. At the same time the Shahsevars and Karadaghis were approaching Ardebil, pillaging mercilessly the villages *en route*. The greater part of Sattar Khan's fedais deserted their leader and returned to Tabreez.

On the 12th (25th) October, Rahim Khan, with the Shahsevars, entered Ardebil itself and engaged in a fight with the few defenders of the town. Sattar Khan, with the governor, shut himself up in the citadel, leaving the town to its fate. Latest information is to the effect that Sattar Khan fled to Sorab, half-way to Tabreez, where he is now, apparently, surrounded by Shahsevars who persistently demand his surrender.

In view of these events, which took place with extreme rapidity, the Persian Government ordered the dispatch of troops from Tabreez to Ardebil, and also two sotnias of Cossacks with machine guns from the Persian Cossack brigade. However, the column was delayed in leaving Tabreez through lack of financial and military supplies, and the column from Tehran, owing to the distance, will probably not reach Ardebil for some time yet.

At the same time the Russian consul at Ardebil has at his disposal only one sotnia of Cossacks with two machine guns, and in order to avoid the risk of splitting up this small force for the protection of the dwellings and offices of Russian subjects in various quarters of the town, the consul proposed that all Russian subjects should collect in one place under the protection of the consulate guard, leaving their property in their houses. The Russian Minister in Tehran was to hold the Persian Government responsible for the value of such property, as also for all losses generally suffered by Russian subjects. Simultaneously, the acting consul-general at Tabreez informed Rahim Khan that responsibility for the safety of Russian subjects is laid personally on him. The above-mentioned proposal of the vice-consul at Ardebil could not be carried out owing to the fact that the local inhabitants, fearing for their lives, hastened to conceal themselves in the houses of Russian subjects, thereby preventing the latter from leaving their homes. At the same time the Shahsevars and Karadaghis were heavily bombarding the citadel, situated next to our consulate, which was therefore in the sphere of fire.

In view of such a situation, and of the undoubted danger threatening our vice-consul and Russian subjects, the Russian Government have taken measures for the immediate reinforcement of the consulate guard at Ardebil by any portion of the troops in the adjoining military district of the Caucasus, as the arrival at Ardebil of any portion of the Russian columns at Tabreez or Kazvin would require much more time.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[40900]

No. 116.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 595.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 4, 1900.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the "Novoe Vremya" and "Bourse Gazette" both publish to-day interesting articles on the situation in Persia, of which the following is a summary:—

The "Novoe Vremya" observes that the official communiqué published yesterday (which I had the honour to forward in my despatch No. 593 of the 3rd November), will scarcely satisfy Russian public opinion. After the end of August (o.s.) when the Astara-Ardebil road was opened for a few caravans under escort of Russian Cossacks, the Shahsevars retired into the depth of Persia, evidently imagining that the Russian troops had decided to put an end to their lawlessness. But the Russians preferred to rest on their deeply earned laurels, and the Shahsevars, with their allies the Karadaghis, again appeared under Ardebil. Then, owing to the inability of the Persian Government to cope with the situation from lack of funds, Russian troops and the moral authority of Russia had to be resorted to again. It was no news to the Persian Government that they would be held responsible for the inviolability of Russian subjects in Ardebil as they had already been warned of this by the Russian Minister. The Russian representatives have at once found two authorities whom they can make responsible for any loss of Russian life or property, for the Russian consul at Tabreez has also

warned Rahim Khan. The Persian Government, however willing to meet the Russian representatives half-way, were helpless, while Rahim Khan answered by bombarding Ardebil. Only then did the Russian Government decide to despatch troops. Perhaps they will arrive in time, and perhaps they will only be in time to perform the funeral rites over Russian subjects who have fallen victims to a foreign quarrel, and be able to agitate for compensation for losses sustained by the survivors. It stands to reason that such a course of action is not in the true interests of Russia nor in accordance with her dignity and her rights in Persia. There is no doubt that the intentions of the Persian Government are excellent, but they are powerless, and it is useless to ask of them that which they cannot perform. One cannot demand the impossible. Common sense ridicules verbal and written representations under the present conditions. Russian subjects require that their lives and their property should be defended—not law-suits after their death. Under these circumstances Russia must assume the responsibility for the entire protection of the lives of her subjects. The despatch of a small column to Tabreez and Kazvin immediately brought about a complete restoration of order and a return to normal conditions of life. The despatch of a force to Ardebil will have the same results. It is only to be regretted that this—the only sensible or possible decision—was not taken much earlier.

Persia is passing through a tragic period of absolute anarchy. The authority of the Government exists but in name. There is a Shah, but his place is taken by a Regent. There is a Medjliss, but as yet it has not met. There is a Senate, but there are only dark rumours as to its activities. There is a post-board Government, but there is no real Government. We should make a great mistake if we were to set for Rahim Khan against Ephrem, the head of the police at Tehran, or for Ephrem against Rahim. But we should have fallen into an unpardonable error if we had left Russian subjects to the mercy of fate. It is immaterial to us how the struggle between Ephrem and Rahim ends, but the fate of Russian subjects is far from being a matter of indifference. European representations about national sovereignty do not in any way apply to the conditions of Asiatic life, and the nominal Persian Government has no use except as a convenient address for diplomatic representations. It is not in a position to be really answerable for its acts; and whether we like it or not we must defend ourselves by such means as will guarantee the safety of Russians and other foreigners. We imagine that the order for the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Kazvin has been annulled in view of the fresh circumstances which have arisen. We hope that the consulate guard at Ardebil will be strengthened sufficiently to ensure that brigandage and pillage shall cease automatically. We presume also that Persia, and not Russia, will have to defray the enormous expenses connected with the dispersal of mere Russian columns for the purpose of restoring law and order and preventing the ruin of the Persian population. Circumstances are compelling us to take upon ourselves the obligation of pacifying, if not administering the Persian provinces near the Russian frontier. This, however, does not mean that we are bound to impose special taxes on the Russian peasant to defray the expenses of this civilising mission. The Russian troops will restore order in Persia, and it is evident that Persia is bound to take upon herself all expenses in this connection.

According to the "Bourse Gazette," the ink of the communiqué announcing the withdrawal of Russian troops from Persia was scarcely dry when another official statement was published to the effect that Russian troops must be dispatched from the Caucasus military district to Persia for the defence of Russian subjects. This, the journal observes, illustrates the deficiency of the information in the possession of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs respecting Persia, and also shows that further disagreeable surprises may be in store for us if Persia does not receive that assistance from outside of which she stands so sorely in need. In the present extraordinary state of affairs, Russia will always be obliged to send troops to any part of Persia near the Russian frontier where troubles may arise. It is humiliating that every step taken by Russian diplomatists is attentively followed in London, Berlin, and Vienna, and a cry goes up from the Opposition press of those countries. If the Russian Government takes any steps for the protection of its representatives in any town in Persia the press in London gets restless, and in Berlin and Vienna it is trumpeted abroad that Russia is taking advantage of her agreement with England to occupy gradually the whole of northern Persia. As soon as they are withdrawn, they scarcely reach the border before it is necessary to replace them by others. The game is both humiliating and expensive, and is likely to continue for some time, as Persia is far from being tranquil internally. The present Persian Government undoubtedly means well, but is helpless. The only real panacea is a loan to Persia on conditions which would ensure the guarantee of a foreign Govern-



ment, and enable that Government to see that the money was spent exclusively on internal pacification. The participation of Russia in guaranteeing this loan could surely arouse no suspicions; and the new Medjliss could not possibly have anything against Russia exercising control over the expenditure of the money raised, nor could they, in view of the recent withdrawal of Russian troops from Kazvin, doubt Russia's good faith or her genuine desire to assist Persia. Russia asks nothing but the possibility and opportunities to develop Russian trade with Persia. Persia's chief trouble and the main source of all the present disturbances is lack of money, and it is Russia's interest to remove this evil for the frequent dispatch of troops is far from being advantageous to her. But Russian help to Persia is only possible on conditions which assure that Persia will in future seriously set about internal reforms, thereby putting an end to the troubles which force our Government to send troops to Persia once more.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[41423]

No. 117.

(No. 191.)

Sir,

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)*

*Tehran, October 15, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit a memorandum prepared by Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Cowan, who accompanied the ex-Shah on his journey from Tehran to Enzeli as representative of his Majesty's legation.

The journey was made without any hitch, and I am happy to be able to report that Mr. Cowan's relations with his Russian colleague and with the Russian officers were excellent throughout.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 117.

*Memorandum by Acting Vice-Consul Cowan.*

IN obedience to His Majesty's Minister's instructions, I accompanied the ex-Shah on his journey from Tehran to Enzeli, as representative of the British legation. The Russian legation was represented by M. Nikrassow, consul attached to the legation staff.

Mohammad Ali Mirza, the ex-Shah, left Zerguendeh for Enzeli on the 9th September. He was accompanied by the ex-Queen and the Anderson, and escorted by 120 Persian Cossacks under a Russian officer, by three Indian sowars from the British legation and three Russian Cossacks from the Russian legation. The whole party was under the charge of Captain Kholabieff, aide-de-camp to the ex-Shah.

Besides the immediate suite, the following also took this opportunity of leaving the country: Amir Bahadur Jung, his brother and nephew; Mujallal-es-Saltaneh, Muwikkir-es-Saltaneh, Arshad-ed-Dawleh, and Barni Standaki (Mishah-es-Sultan).

Owing to the bad condition of the horses provided for the ex-Shah by the Persian Government, progress was very slow, and Enzeli was not reached until the 28th September. The journey was uneventful, the only incident worth recording being the presence of two men in the uniforms of ghilams of the Russian legation in the suite of Amir Bahadur. The representative of that legation, M. Nikrassow, immediately made investigations, as a result of which it was apparent that these men were not regular servants of the Russian legation. They stated that they had been provided with ghilams' uniforms by M. Baranovsky in order to escort their amir and Zinjan. M. Nikrassow was very indignant, and ordered them to give up their uniforms while he telegraphed for orders. M. Sabline confirmed M. Baranovsky's action, much to the annoyance of M. Nikrassow, who stated that he had no right to sanction such an action. The uniforms were, however, given back to the men at Kazvin, where they left us for Zinjan.

The ex-Shah was throughout very cheerful, but somewhat childish. He was greatly pleased by an equestrian display given by the Russian Cossacks at Kazvin. This regiment supplied a sotnia to accompany us to Enzeli. Their methods in clearing the road for the party were very thorough, even if somewhat overbearing.

Upon arriving at Enzeli it was decided to give the ex-Shah a preliminary taste of

sailing before finally embarking him. Accordingly on the 29th September a short visit was paid to the "Skobelev," the ship upon which His ex-Majesty was to travel. He was very much afraid, and clung hard to Captain Kholabieff and M. Nikrassow. The next day, however, he was full of courage and encouraged the Queen, though he still clutched Captain Kholabieff by the arm. He departed finally on the 30th September at 3:45 P.M.

Amir Bahadur and those with him had left on the preceding night. Amir Bahadur, though outwardly cheerful, was hurt on account of the little notice which the ex-Shah took of him. Indeed, he hardly spoke a word to him during the whole journey.

In conclusion, I should like to express my high appreciation of my Russian colleague, M. Nikrassow, who acted throughout with a straightforwardness and loyalty which left nothing to be desired.

N. P. COWAN.

[40994]

No. 118.

(No. 193. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

*Tehran, October 18, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, with reference to my telegram No. 745 of the 1st October, copy of an interesting despatch from Mr. Acting Consul-General Smart on the subject of German activity in Azerbaijan. I have read this despatch with certain omissions to my Russian colleague, who said he entirely agreed with Mr. Smart as to the shortcomings of the representatives of the Russian trading houses at Tabreez, and that he had already reported that better men were needed to combat German competition.

M. Poklewsky had already received from his consul-general intelligence of the spinning factory to be worked by German engineers, and had spoken to Count Qundt on this subject and regarding the Urmia Lake Navigation enterprise. Count Qundt appeared to be unfamiliar with these matters, but said that he knew that Herr Seltschmann, the German consular agent at Tabreez, was a man of much commercial activity.

M. Poklewsky is fully alive to the importance of preventing German participation in Imam Kuli Mirza's Urmia Lake Navigation concession. I reported in my telegram No. 706 of the 31st August that Mr. Stevens had written to Imam Kuli Mirza at Sujbulak in regard to his alleged intention of associating Germans in the enterprise provided he failed to obtain the co-operation of Mr. Stevens. Imam Kuli Mirza replied in evasive terms, and Mr. Smart tells me that the German consular agent has announced his intention of going to Sujbulak at an early date. It is not unlikely that this is for the purpose of negotiating with Imam Kuli Mirza, and it thus behoves the Russian Road Company to come to terms with the latter without delay. Unfortunately the company is reluctant to allow the participation of Mr. Stevens even as paid manager, and it is more than doubtful whether without Mr. Stevens' co-operation in some form or another Imam Kuli Mirza will admit the Russians to any share of the enterprise. Should the road company manager and the secretary of the Russian consulate-general, whose mission to Sujbulak was reported in my telegram No. 745 of the 1st October, fail to come to an arrangement with Imam Kuli Mirza, M. Poklewsky will be prepared to recommend that the company should compromise by the admission of Mr. Stevens in such form as to render Russian participation acceptable to Imam Kuli Mirza.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 118.

*Acting Consul-General Smart to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 31.)

Sir,

*Tabreez, October 3, 1909.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 190 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to submit the following report on German activity in Azerbaijan:—

In the spring of 1908 a Tabreez merchant, Aglar Rahim Kazvinli, went to Berlin to

negotiate the purchase of machinery for a cotton-spinning factory at Tabreez. He finally effected the purchase, through the Berlin firm of Jordan and Berger, on very advantageous terms. The purchase-money was deposited in the Deutsche Bank, and it was stipulated in the contract that the money should not be paid over before the factory had been installed at Tabreez for six months and worked satisfactorily. The German company, moreover, undertook to make arrangements for repairing the machinery when necessary, the cost of such repairs to be paid by Aglia Rahim. This business of repairs was entrusted to the new German company just formed here by MM. Schünnemann and Mossig, and the necessary machinery is being supplied gratis.

The ground for the cotton-spinning factory has already been purchased and the building is being erected. German engineers are to work the factory, but Aglia Rahim denies that any German capital is invested in the concern. The initial outlay of this enterprise is fairly heavy. I know that £ T. 36,000 were remitted to Aglia Rahim when at Berlin, but I do not know how much of that money was spent on the machinery. The prospects of a cotton-spinning factory in Tabreez do not seem very bright, as there is not enough cotton in Azerbaijan. Roshit or Kazvin would seem to be more appropriate places for such an enterprise. The large capital expenditure and the commercial risks of such an enterprise, combined with the very favourable terms granted to Aglia Rahim, have aroused suspicions that German support is behind the business.

Aglia Rahim is also importing from Germany 5,000 Mauser rifles, which, owing to some slight defect, he was able to buy very cheap. He obtained duty-free transit passes through Russia for this consignment and for the machinery. The rifles were apparently intended for the late Shah, which perhaps explains the facilities accorded by the Russian Government. But I am at a loss to understand why the Russian Government should have accorded facilities for the passage in transit of the machinery. I understand that the Russian customs duties remitted amounted to 40,000 roubles. Aglia Rahim went to St. Petersburg and arranged the matter through the Persian Minister, with the help of Nad-ad-Dowleh, then Foreign Minister. Both consignments were also exempted from Persian customs dues.

The Compagnie allemanne, formed by MM. Schünnemann and Mossig, both Germans, is a mysterious business. Besides undertaking the repairs of Aglia Rahim's cotton-spinning machinery it proposes to manufacture tools and buttons, and even to build light craft for the Urmī Lake. It is also the transport agency in Tabreez for the Deutsche Levante Linie, and it has installed a dispensary. There is obviously very close connection between this company and Aglia Rahim's business, and it is suspected that a gun factory is contemplated. I have been unable to obtain any proof confirming this suspicion. The nominal capital of the Compagnie allemanne is 28,000 toman, divided into 28 shares of 1,000 toman each; of these, MM. Schünnemann and Mossig hold 7, and 24 Persians each hold 1 share. The Persian shareholders, who have already subscribed 250 toman each of their respective shares, are on the whole sound traders. Some of these Persian shareholders have approached the governor-general with a view to obtaining the concession of the road to the Urmī Lake via Maragha. I do not know whether M. Schünnemann has anything to do with this proposal. The governor-general threw cold water on the scheme.

There are at present three engineers, one Austrian, and two Germans, and others are expected. I do not know how they will be divided up between the two concerns.

The Germans are, undoubtedly, coveting the Urmī Lake Navigation Concession. The German consular agent is, I think, working to secure German partnership with Imam Kuli, or, failing that, to get the concession transferred from Imam Kuli to a nominally Persian Company, backed to some extent by German capital and staffed by Germans. The German engineer, who runs the one vessel now on the lake, serves as a useful agent for Mr. Schünnemann.

The German legation has transmitted to Mr. Schünnemann, a German decoration, the first class of the Kronenorden, for presentation to Mukhlis-es-Saltanah. The governor-general informed me that this decoration was accorded two years ago in connection with the German Bank negotiations, but that for various reasons the presentation had been deferred until now. He is much embarrassed and wants to avoid the honour imposed on him. To gain time, he has informed Mr. Schünnemann that he cannot receive him during Ramadan. Mukhlis-es-Saltanah gave me most positive assurances that he would not be a party to German intrigues. He said that he was aware of the folly of a pro-German policy, that Germany could not protect Persia against Russia, that Persia's only hope lay in clinging to England and Russia. He is of the opinion that Germany would only seek to create an interest in Persia to further it eventually with England and Russia for advantages elsewhere. He said, however,

that he did not attach much importance to the German danger. He assured me that, when he was in Berlin, Baron von Rosen, who is a personal friend of his, had told him explicitly that Germany had not enough interests in this part of Asia to make it worth her while to quarrel with other Powers about Persia, and that Persia must cling to England and Russia. I think Mukhlis-es-Saltanah, in spite of his previous pro-German record, is sincere in this case. He has learnt much during his year of exile.

Some surprise has been caused by the fact that the Germans should show so much interest in this part of Persia. I venture to submit the following general considerations with a view to showing that, apart from the purely political aspect of the question, there is now in Azerbaijan an almost natural opening for the Germans.

There are two elements in the population here which can be utilised by the Germans. Firstly, there are the pro-German nationalists, of whom Sikat-ul-Islam, the only Mujtehid now in Tabreez, is the leading spirit. The Germans, by exploiting anti-Russian feeling, can enlist the sympathies of this section, and they have already done some work in this direction. Secondly, there are the genuine traders, who have no special political bias, but seek merely material advantages. This class may constitute a much more serious danger.

It must be borne in mind that the Persians are now naturally requiring foreign assistance for their enterprises, not so much in capital as in commercial and technical experience. Without a doubt they would prefer to associate Englishmen with themselves, but that is now out of the question in Azerbaijan. The traditional Persian idea that the French are very pleasant people, but not to be taken seriously, renders them averse to seeking assistance in France. They will not work with the Russians, in whom they have no confidence whatever. Therefore, by an almost natural process of exhaustion they turn to the Germans. Aglia Rahim Kazvinli whose commercial credit is excellent, belongs to this second class.

The English, with the immense moral influence they now enjoy in Azerbaijan, and their high commercial reputation, could, but for the Anglo-Russian agreement, with comparative ease drive the Germans out. But, with the existence of the agreement, the task of resisting the Germans devolves on the Russians. It must be confessed that the Russians are very badly organised to meet German competition. In the south German pioneers have to struggle against some English business men, who are not disliked by the natives and who work in harmony with their consuls. Here the situation is quite different. The Russians are disliked and distrusted by all classes, not only by the Nationalists, but by the genuine merchants, who have suffered much at the hands of Russian merchants and officials. Moreover, the Russians here are in no sense of the word business men, and they are disunited. The consulate-general, the bank, and the road company, generally act independently of one another, often against one another. As a typical instance of this incoherence, I may mention that Mr. Miller learnt from me first that the road company had been negotiating with Imam Kuli Mirza regarding the Urmī Lake navigation. Of course the natural advantages of Russia are such as to ensure her commercial preponderance in Azerbaijan, but, unless her men on the spot alter their methods, she may eventually find Germany a thorn in her side. At present they do not seem to attach much importance to the danger.

Another pro-German influence to be reckoned with is Turkey. Probably the Turks would like to see a strong German interest established in Azerbaijan as a barrier to Russian penetration. For instance, in view of their forward policy around Urmī, it must be a question of vital importance to them that the lake should not be under Russian control. Presumably, therefore, the Turks would be very glad to see the Germans established on the lake.

The foregoing remarks are not intended to apply so much to the actual cases before us as to the more remote question of the possibility of German penetration in Azerbaijan. It may be that their present activity is only spasmodic and not part of a definite campaign. The most hopeful feature is the important part the German consular agent appears to be playing in this activity. The Germans have now to be weighed by the natives in the balances in which the Germans were found wanting. M. Schünnemann, in the long run, is not likely to inspire the natives with much confidence in German methods. Moreover, it is difficult to take M. Schünnemann and his friends seriously, and it has yet to be shown that anything more earnest is behind those rather crude enterprises. However, whether these enterprises are destined to collapse or not it would be unwise to leave them unheeded. A serious effort made now would effectively prevent the Germans from gaining a footing here, if such is their intention. I doubt, however, whether the Russians are capable of such an effort. If the German

danger ever becomes a reality in this part of the Russian sphere, it is not unlikely that the Russians will be compelled to turn to us for help to resist their energetic competitors.

I have, &c.  
W. A. SMART.

[40969]

No. 119.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)*

(No. 475.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.  
ARDEBIL.

*St. Petersburg, November 8, 1909.*

Information has reached here that the Shahsevens have plundered a great number of houses and shops, of which many belong to Russian subjects, but that they have as yet not attacked the consulate.  
(Sent to Tehran.)

[41256]

No. 120.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 478.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.  
PLEASE see my telegram No. 473 of the 5th instant: Advance to Persian Government.

*St. Petersburg, November 9, 1909.*

I learn to-day that the Russian Government are prepared to participate in the advance to the Persian Government, and that the Russian Minister at Tehran has already been instructed in that sense. Instructions have been sent to him at the same time to try to obtain the concession to the Road Company of the navigation on Lake Urumia.

I learn from M. Ivolosky that, as at present proposed, Mr. Stevens will be indemnified when the concession is granted.

[41257]

No. 121.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey. (Received November 9.)*

(No. 479.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, November 9, 1909.*

THE reinforcements for Ardebil have arrived. I gather that no action is to be taken against the Shahsevens, as no Russian lives have been lost, though Russian interests suffered during the pillage. The Russian force will preserve order in the town, and if the Persian troops arrive no fighting will be allowed in the town, though, I am informed by M. Ivolosky, they may fight the Shahsevens anywhere else. His Excellency also told me that Rahim Khan, who had reached Sarak, had proclaimed his intention of marching on Tehran with a force of Karadaghis and Shahsevens combined. I said I could only consider this an empty threat. M. Ivolosky admitted that it might be so, but Rahim Khan would perhaps follow the example of the Bakhtiars, and, in these circumstances, a withdrawal of the Russian forces garrisoning Kazvin would be unsafe. This latter announcement, which is true, I think, to press attacks on the Russian Government's weak and temporising policy, is annoying.

[41368]

No. 122.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 10.)*

(No. 773.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 10, 1909.*

YPRIM, formerly the moving spirit in the sipahdar's force, left Tehran some time ago for Ardebil in command. Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me of nationalist volunteers who, with Persians, Cossacks, and Bakhtiars, form a good nucleus of a force of an expedition of 1,500 men, with two Maxims and four guns.

[41256]

No. 123.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 480.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.  
ADVANCE to Persian Government.  
Russian Government have informed Imperial Bank of Persia of their concurrence. Reference is to your telegram No. 768 of the 4th November and telegram No. 478 of the 9th November from Sir A. Nicolson.

*Foreign Office, November 10, 1909.*

[41384]

No. 124.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)*

(No. 599.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 8, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith translation of an article in the semi-official paper, the "Rossia," relative to the situation in Persia, and to the measures which have recently been taken by the Russian Government. Among other observations the "Rossia" calls attention to the fact that the withdrawal of the Russian column from Kazvin has only been decided on in principle, and that, "in accordance with the course of events, the realisation of this measure can be postponed." I do not doubt that, unless some exceptional event occurs, the column will be withdrawn in accordance with what M. Ivolosky was good enough to inform this embassy, and also with what was officially published in the press. Moreover, as is justly argued in the article, "the presence of the Russian troops at Kazvin cannot have any influence whatever on events in other parts of Persia, such as Khorassan, Astrabad, or Ardebil."

I have, &c.  
A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 124.

*Extract from the "Rossia" of October 25 (November 7), 1909.*

(Translation.)

EVENTS at Ardebil and the dispatch of troops thither for the defence of the Russian vice-consulate and Russian subjects have been widely commented on by all shades of the press, and comment is often made at the same time on the decision of the Government, as announced in the papers, to recall the greater part of the troops which were sent to Kazvin last summer to assist Russians and other foreigners in Tehran in the event of the arrival of the Nationalists and Bakhtiars causing disorders, and thus endangering the European colony. Some papers see in these two facts a contradiction, and accuse the Government of inconsistency and wavering in their Persian policy. All such deductions are evidently based on a misunderstanding.

Owing to the almost complete absence in Persia of convenient lines of communication, separate parts of the country are to a great extent distinct in themselves; and the sphere of action of a column situated in any one region is perforce restricted to a somewhat inconsiderable radius within that region. Consequently it is well known to every Persian that the presence of Russian troops in Kazvin or Tabreez cannot have any influence whatever in other parts of Persia, such as Khorassan, Astrabad, or Ardebil. For the same reason every Russian column dispatched to Persia is entrusted with special tasks in connection with the locality in which it is sent. Thus the Tabreez column had for its direct object the opening up of free communication along our Julfa-Tabreez road, and the guaranteeing of the carriage of supplies for Russians and Europeans living in Tabreez, which was at that time besieged by the troops of the ex-Shah. Again, the Kazvin column was destined to safeguard traffic along the Enzeli-Tehran road, and if necessity should arise to march on Tehran for the defence of the European colony. But it is impossible to maintain that the continued presence of our troops in Kazvin could have averted the advance of the Shahsevens and Karadaghis on Ardebil, inasmuch as the road from Kazvin to Ardebil passes across mountains, and no considerable military force marching along it could have reached its destination within less than a fortnight.

The recall of each separate column from Persia, in part or in *toto*, obviously depends on the situation in the particular part of the country where it is stationed; and if the Russian Government after a detailed discussion of the question at a special meeting of Ministers (including the Minister of War) decide that circumstances render the maintenance of troops in this or that part of Persia superfluous, it is undoubtedly right that those troops should be recalled—more especially as the climatic conditions in Persia frequently affect the health of the men, besides which such expeditions take the troops away from their regular drill, disorganise to some extent the military district of the Caucasus from which they are drawn, &c. Moreover, according to our information, the recall of the Kazvin column has been decided on in principle only, and has not yet been put into effect. It is evident that the realisation of this measure can be postponed, if the course of events requires it. It does not by any means follow from what we have said above that the Government, while recalling one force, could not be convinced at the same time that the despatch of a fresh column to another part of Persia was necessitated by a change in the situation.

It may also be asked how far the despatch of our troops to Ardebil is evoked by necessity. In the "Novoe Vremya" apparently M. Menshikov denies this necessity, and considers our action constitutes, on the one hand, interference in the internal affairs of Persia on behalf of the constitutional party, for the Shahsevens are far from being brigands, but are rather devoted servants of the ex-Shah, fighting against the present state of affairs in Persia, and that, on the other hand, there are no genuine Russian subjects in Ardebil, and the vice-consulate has only itself to blame for damage, in that it has established itself next to the citadel close to the shells of the belligerents.

There is much that is inaccurate in M. Menshikov's information about the Shahsevens. This tribe has for a long time past paid but scanty recognition to the Persian Government, and has at the same time caused much trouble by its constant raids and pillaging along our frontier posts and settlements. The authorities in the Caucasus have in countless lists of acts of violence and pillage committed by them in the frontier region. We remember, amongst others, that no further back than last year a captain of the frontier guard was killed, after which an entire punitive expedition was equipped against them, but even this did not prevent the repetition of the raids as soon as the column was withdrawn from the frontier. During this year the catalogue of these raids has been added to by a whole series of fresh skirmishes with our frontier guards, and with excursions for the purpose of driving cattle away from our settlements, &c. The statement that the Shahsevens took any part in the siege of Tabreez is also untrue. There were no representatives of this tribe with the Shah's forces round Tabreez. Only the Karadaghis were there under the leadership of Rahim Khan. Up till now the Shahsevens have only taken advantage of the absolute helplessness of the Persian Government to plunder unopposed the peaceful population of the Ardebil district, which they also did continually during the reign of Mohammed Ali. To what extent their present action is actuated by ideals may best be judged by the fact that, having gained possession of Ardebil, they immediately began to pillage and burn not only the town itself, but its environs. We do not know either whence M. Menshikov has obtained the information that in Ardebil there are only a group of Tartars, Armenians, and Persians with very doubtful Russian passports. We have information showing that it is estimated that there are some sixty persons who, even if they are for the most part Armenians, Tartars, and Caucasian Persians, are undoubtedly Russian subjects in this town. As regards the vice-consulate, it must be pointed out that from the date of its institution it has not changed its quarters, and when the site was chosen it was scarcely possible to foresee all possible events of the future.

The desire to avoid interference in the internal struggle of Persian parties remains, as heretofore, the fundamental principle of the Russian Government; but, on the other hand, the Russian Government not only have the right but are directly bound to take all possible measures for the safety of their missions and subjects in Persia when the Persian Government are themselves powerless to effect this. If the arrival of the Russian troops results, as it did in Tabreez, in the creation of a situation favourable to this or that party, there is no foundation for the supposition that this is due to some hidden aim of the Russian Government. A punitive expedition against the Shahsevens, should they dare to make any attempt on the life of the Russian vice-consul or of Russian subjects in Ardebil, can scarcely be called intervention in the struggle between political parties in Persia.

[41425]

No. 125.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)*(No. 194.)  
Sir,*Tehran, October 20, 1909.*

WITH reference to Sir C. Spring Rice's despatch No. 175 of the 12th August, 1907, respecting the concession of the Deutsche Orient Bank, a copy of which was therein enclosed, I am informed by the German Legation that article 8 fixed the period of two years within which the bank should open, and not three as stated in the despatch above referred to and its enclosure.

As the Deutsche Orient Bank has not opened an office in Tehrau, the concession lapsed, in accordance with article 8, on the 24th July last.

The German Legation endeavoured at the time to obtain its prolongation, but I understand that this was found impossible, owing to the unsettled state of affairs. Though the German Minister might, during May or June last, have obtained from Saad-ed-Dowleh, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, a prolongation of the concession subject to the subsequent ratification by the Medjliss, just as we did in the case of the Arabistan Telegraph Convention, I understand that this was not done. The German Minister will, however, I believe, endeavour to obtain a renewal of the concession when the Medjliss meets, and no doubt will employ for this purpose Mirza Reza Khan, who has been munshi of his legation for some twenty years, and who now, when he is retiring on a pension, has been elected a deputy. Mirza Reza Khan's son, Mirza Hassan Khan, who knows German very well, is about to be appointed legation munshi, to succeed his father, who becomes a Member of Parliament.

Dr. Hesse, the German dragoon, told Mr. Churehill that the Deutsche Bank concession was looked upon as Herr Steurich's child, and as the ex-German Minister at Tehran now in the German Foreign Office, took a paternal interest in his offspring, an attempt would be made to keep it alive, but as there was practically nothing in it which really amounted to a concession, the German Bank could, when they liked, open a branch at Tehran without it.

I have, &amp;c.

G. BARCLAY.

[41427]

No. 126.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)*

(No. 196.)

*Tehran, October 20, 1909.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 138 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to state that I had already received from His Majesty's consul-general at Bushire copy of his despatch No. 12, Commercial, of the 4th August last to you, regarding the facilities accorded to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company for the dispatch of telegrams between their London offices and their representatives in Arabistan.

It is clear, as Lieutenant Wilson points out, that other British firms would have just cause for protest against the privilege enjoyed by the oil company were the present telegraphic facilities granted to them indefinitely, but as, if the Assembly ratifies the recent agreement, the taking over of the Arabistan lines by the Indo-European Telegraph Department will afford a convenient opportunity for the withdrawal of this privilege, I agree with Major Cox in thinking that the present arrangement may be allowed to continue for the moment.

I have, &amp;c.

G. BARCLAY.

[41428]

No. 127.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)*

(No. 197.)

*Tehran, October 23, 1909.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 135 of the 10th September respecting the Bakhtiari Khans and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, I have the honour to transmit  
[1681]

herewith copy of a despatch which I have addressed to His Majesty's consul at Ahwaz on the subject.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 127.

*Sir G. Barclay to Lieutenant Ranking.*

(No. 3.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, October 23, 1909.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 29 of the 16th August, I have now to forward to you copy of an authoritative statement from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company as to the position of the Bakhtiari khans as regards the shares to which they are entitled in companies formed for the exploitation of the oil deposits in their country.<sup>9</sup>

As far as I am able to judge, this statement appears to be satisfactory from the point of view of the khans' interest, all the more so as I understand that the second alternative rendering of the article fixing the extent of participation of the khans in the profits of the enterprise is the more correct of the two.

I should be glad to know if you concur in this view, and I think it would be well if the manager were advised to make the position clear to the khans, who may well have been led into error by the manager's previous statement.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

[41429]

No. 128.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)*

(No. 198.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, October 25, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your telegram No. 471 of the 20th instant.

I entirely share your views that to take measures to bring about the convocation of a Persian Senate to counterbalance the influence of the Assembly would constitute an undue interference in the internal affairs of Persia.

I presume that the Russian Government would argue that the constitution prescribes the institution of a Senate, and that intervention with a view to the observance of the prescriptions of the constitution is no more than the cordiality to our representations in the past in favour of the restoration of a constitutional régime. This argument does not, in my opinion, bear investigation. Apart from the fact that it was only with some reluctance that His Majesty's Government joined in these representations, we were careful to abstain from recommending any particular form of constitution, and, moreover, it is nowhere laid down in the organic law that a Senate must be appointed at once. Indeed article 47 clearly contemplates a period during which Parliament will consist of only one Chamber. Besides this, such departure from our policy of non-intervention as was involved by our representations for the restoration of Constitutional Government was justified by the knowledge that while Mohammed Ali ruled as an absolute monarch the country was falling into a state when intervention of a more drastic kind would have been unavoidable. Persia's salvation does not depend today on the institution of a Senate, and I should be loath to press upon the Persian Government a measure of such doubtful utility.

As far as I can judge, the leading Nationalists, as distinguished from the Calânet which I believe is in its favour, are opposed to a second Chamber for the present, and I am inclined to share their view. Opinions may differ as to whether in any circumstances Parliamentary Government in Persia will prove a success, but there can, I think, be little doubt that for the moment the simpler its form the better will be its chance, and that it would be unwise at present to complicate the parliamentary machinery by the institution of a second Chamber, which in the circumstances of to-day is not likely to be in harmony with the popular Assembly. It would almost certainly be composed in great part of men imbued with the corrupt ideas of the late régime. As you are aware,

<sup>9</sup> Anglo-Persian Oil Company, September 3, 1909 (enclosed in Foreign Office despatch No. 135 of the 10th September, 1909).

the Senate contemplated by the organic law was to be composed of thirty members appointed by the Crown and thirty elected by the nation. The Regent is already criticised for having gathered round the young Shah a large number of the very same persons who held offices at Court under Mohammed Ali, and this may be taken as an index of the class from which he would select his thirty nominees. But apart from the Regent's particular views, the dearth of enlightened men is so great that it would be difficult to fill the Senate with any but members of the class which has monopolised Government offices in the past, and it is pretty certain that these would be opposed to any reform. Once given a Senate in opposition to the Assembly, every disaffected man—and reforms, especially financial, will make many such—will find the Senate a centre from which intrigue to hamper the Assembly can easily be started.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

[41430]

No. 129.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)*

(No. 199.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, October 25, 1909.*

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your despatch No. 112 of the 26th July, I have the honour to transmit a translation prepared by Abbas Kuli Khan and Mr. Churchill of the agreement of the 15th November, 1905, entered into on behalf of Mr. D'Arcy with the Bakhtiari khans, a translation of which, prepared by His Majesty's consulate-general at Isfahan, was enclosed in Mr. Grant Duff's despatch No. 267, Confidential, of the 20th December, 1905.

It will be seen by comparing the two translations that there are a great many discrepancies, which are attributed by my Oriental staff to the fact that the translation made in Isfahan at the time is quite obviously a very free translation, whereas the present translation is as literal as possible.

In my despatches Nos. 148 and 173 of the 29th July and 18th September respectively I mentioned Mr. Ranking's view that under the terms of the convention the Bakhtiari khans were entitled to 3 per cent. of the issued share capital not only in companies formed for the exploitation of oil in the Bakhtiari country, but also in companies formed for the exploitation of oil in other parts of Persia. Whether the English text as prepared for Mr. Grant Duff warranted this view has always seemed to me more than doubtful, but it is quite clear from the translation now made by Abbas Kuli Khan and Mr. Churchill that the Persian text does not admit of such an interpretation.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 129.

*Agreement between Mr. D'Arcy and Bakhtiari Khans.*

In the name of God the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate.

(Translation.)

THIS is a contract between two parties, the one party being Mr. D'Arcy and the associates in the concessions company, and the other party the Bakhtiari khans, in accordance with the following six articles:—

Article 1. During the five years the associates of the company have the right to make all kinds of experiments, all kinds of actual investigations, and [to use their] authority, and enquiries, in order to discover petroleum and to make roads, paths, pipe lines for this work, and to build all they find necessary and desirable, and also to build houses, and to obtain and use whatever they consider necessary, [such as] effects, instruments, &c. Whatever land is required by the associates for this purpose will be given by the Bakhtiari khans, and land for the purpose of building houses for people, whatever required, whether the land be cultivated and watered by irrigation or rain, the associates of the company will pay the fair price of the day for the same. Wherever buildings, residences, and houses are built two towers should also be built near by, in each of which ten guards should live. Should there arise any difference regarding the fair price, a reference is to be made in order to fix the fair price to the British Vice-

consul at Mohammerah and to the governor of the camp, who must be appointed by the khans in accordance with article 4. For these purposes and for the road guards and the guards for the houses and effects, &c., and every kind of vigilance for the people who are seeking and boring wells, and for all the staff and workmen who are required for these purposes by the associates of the company, for the protection of the staff of the company, and houses, and effects, and roads, &c., and to give assistance to the associates of the company in order to obtain and facilitate their object the khans will have the right to receive 2,000,000 a-year.

This contract is in force for every period the associates of the company desire to work in the Bakhtiari country, and if before five years the associates of the company did not wish to work, the khans have not the right to claim the above-mentioned sum, and as long as they are at work to obtain the above-mentioned sum every three months in advance. The first instalment of 500,000 will be paid after the signature of the contract, and in return for the sums which the khans will receive they are responsible for any robbery which is committed or loss or damage which may be incurred through the Bakhtiari tribe, &c., in the Bakhtiari country, by the persons and staff of the company, to the houses, machinery, roads, effects, and property of the camp and staff, &c.; so that the khans will be liable for the payment of all losses which occur in Bakhtiari territory. The agent of the company must keep cash in an iron box so that it is further from danger. Therefore they must appoint proper guards with great care for the high roads and for the roads which will be made, and also for persons and houses, for plant and for machinery, for the property and effects, &c. Before the finding of petroleum the khans will establish two camps of guards for the above-mentioned protection at two points to be selected by the agents of the company. As soon as petroleum is found the khans are to establish any number of camps of guards as required at various points, so that in any case the above-mentioned protection is secured.

Art. 2. If the petroleum sought after by the associates of the company should be found in the Bakhtiari country and if they should desire to refine the petroleum and to trade in it the two parties accept and agree to carry out the conditions mentioned in article 1 up to the expiration of the term of the company's concession, and in this case the associates of the company agree that after the pipe lines for petroleum have been constructed and petroleum will pass through the pipes they should pay every year 600,000 over and above the above-mentioned sum, which makes a total of 3,600,000 payable quarterly in advance, for the protection of the roads, pipe-line roads, for the pipes, for the petroleum flowing through the pipes, for houses, persons, staff, and effects in the Bakhtiari country and the property of the khans. Furthermore also, after the formation the petroleum in the Bakhtiari country and the flowing of petroleum through the pipes, the Bakhtiari khans will be given three shares out of every hundred shares of the ordinary [public] shares of every petroleum company or companies formed in the Bakhtiari country, and the cost of the three shares of such company will not be claimed from the khans, and they [the company] have not the right to claim the value of the three shares.

Art. 3. The associates of the company agree that should the petroleum wells which have been constructed and are being used by the Bakhtiari khans be in general damaged, rendered unworkable, or the cause of loss to the Bakhtiari khans through the operations of the associates of the company, they will give satisfaction to the khans for this kind of loss; and should there arise between the two parties in this respect any difference, it should be referred to the British consul-general at Isfahan to act as arbitrator in removing the difference.

Art. 4. The Bakhtiari khans must appoint a special and particular governor and chief at the camps for the camps of guards and Persian workmen, for facilitating and carrying out the objects of the associates of the company. Whichever of the guards, staff, or Persian workmen should not give satisfaction in his duties with, at the indication of the company's agent, be punished and forced to work; and further, they will not allow any dispute to arise among them or that they transgress in their duties or delay, and in case of such occurrences to punish the offenders at the indication of the company's agent, and to facilitate in general the operations, objects, and work, and to secure the protection as above mentioned and the security and safety of the associates of the company.

Art. 5. The sum received by the Bakhtiari khans from the associates of the company in accordance with this contract is in return for the work stipulated in this contract. Therefore, should the khans or their employees delay in the duties specified above and in the protection above mentioned, the associates of the company have the right to demand

compensation from the khans for their losses, with the knowledge of the British consul-general at Isfahan, but the contract will not be cancelled; but the khans are guarantors and responsible for any person who brings any claim or interferes with the stipulations of this contract.

Art. 6. After the expiration of the term of the company's concession from the Government whatever buildings which may belong to the company in the Bakhtiari territory will belong to the khans.

All the stipulations written in this contract are correct.

(Sealed)

SAMSAM-ES-SALTANEH.

(Sealed)

SERDAR ASSAD, ALI KULI

ALI KULI BAKHTIARI.

The stipulations of this contract are correct.

(Sealed)

SHAHAB-ES-SALTANEH.

(Sealed)

SARIM-UL-MULK.

It is correct:

NASSIR BAKUTIARI.

This contract was signed and sealed in my presence by his Excellency Samsam-es-Saltaneh, his Excellency Serdar Assad, his Excellency Shahab-es-Saltaneh, his Excellency Sarim-ul-Mulk, on the 17th Ramazan, 1323, equivalent to the 15th November, 1905.

MOHAMMAD TARI AMIN-UL-SHARIEH.

(Sealed)

AMIN-UL-SHARIEH.

17 Ramazan, 1323 (November 15, 1905).

[41433]

No. 150.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 11.)

Sir,

India Office, November 10, 1909.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to inclose copy of a note by the Director-in-Chief of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, in which he applies for instructions with regard to the preparation, for presentation to the Persian Government, of the account showing the expenditure incurred in the construction of the Central Persia telegraph line.

Subject to any observations that Secretary Sir E. Grey may have to offer, Viscount Morley would approve the view that the cost of providing the third or Persian wire on the line should be included in its capital cost, and that the second line, with two wires, from Telraan to Kushan may be considered to be an extension of the Central Persia line from the Indian frontier to Kushan.

The proposal in paragraph 5 of Mr. Kirk's note to make the charges incurred under article 2 of the convention of the 16th August, 1901, the subject of a separate claim against the Persian Government is, as pointed out in paragraph 6 of the note, one of considerable financial importance. The wording of the convention is not wholly clear, and it is recognized by Mr. Kirk that the Persian Government may contend that under its terms these charges should be included in the capital cost of the line. Lord Morley is satisfied, however, on careful consideration of the matter, that the view taken by Mr. Kirk should be supported, and he would propose, subject to the concurrence of Sir E. Grey, to instruct Mr. Kirk that the bill of costs should be prepared accordingly.

I am, &c.

COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

*Note by Director-in-chief, Indo-European Telegraph Department, dated August 24, 1909.*

THE bill showing the expenditure that has been incurred in the construction of the Central Persia telegraph line has been received by me from the examiner of telegraph accounts in India, and it is now necessary to prepare from it the bill of costs in connection with the line which has to be presented to the Persian Government for their acceptance.

2. The Central Persia line was constructed under a convention between the United Kingdom and Persia, which was signed at Tehran on the 16th August, 1901. A copy of this convention is put up for reference. There are several points, as laid down in the articles of the convention, concerning which definite instructions are required before the bill for presentation to the Persian Government can be prepared.

3. In October 1907 I wrote as follows to the director of telegraphs at Tehran:—

"The convention lays it down (article 4) that the Persian Government leases to this department the use of the line, and (article 7) that the line is to be of three wires. But as a matter of fact, the third wire is not leased to us, and if we pay a percentage on the capital cost of this third wire, we are in the strange position of paying rental to the Persian Government for a wire the use of which is kept in their own hands. It may be that it was the intention that this should be done, and, as you were present in Tehran when the negotiations were taking place for the concession to construct the line, you may be able to clear up this point. It is possible that to obtain the concession it was necessary that we should agree to pay rent on the third wire."

The director, Mr. Barker, replied to this as follows:—

"As regards the payment of rent by us for the cost of the third or Persian wire, I have looked through the correspondence which passed during the period anterior to the signing of the convention, and I can find nothing to show that the position we now find ourselves in was then foreseen. The legation is of opinion that it would be impossible to contest the point now, and that we must accept the situation as we find it."

It appears to me that the conclusion that it would be impossible to contest the point now may be accepted as correct, and that the cost of providing the third wire must be included in the capital cost of the line on which the rental of 4 per cent. has to be paid.

4. Under article 10 of the convention, it was agreed that the Persian Government were to be provided with an additional wire along the existing line between Tehran and Kashan. But when this line was carefully examined it was found that it could not with safety carry any more wires, even if it were reconstructed, and that it would be necessary to put up another line of posts if more wires had to be erected. The Persian Minister of Telegraphs had the matter explained to him, and he gave authority to construct a second telegraph line from Tehran to Kashan. This was done, and two wires were erected on it, one for the use of the Persian Government and one for the use of the Indo-European Telegraph Department. It will be seen, therefore, that instead of the additional wire on the old line of posts according to the convention, we have provided a new line of posts with two wires. One of these wires is used by the Persian Government and the other by this department. It was very necessary to put this second wire up for this department, as without it the British wires beyond Kashan could not be fully worked. It seems but just that this section of line from Tehran to Kashan should be considered a continuation of the Central Persia line from Kobi-malik-shah to Kashan, and that the rental and charges connected with the Tehran-Kashan section should be treated in the same way as in the case of the line constructed from Kashan to the Indian frontier.

5. Another question that requires settlement is whether the charges incurred under article 2 of the convention are to be included in the capital cost of the line, on which 4 per cent. has to be paid as rental under article 4. Mr. Barker informed me that, having gone carefully through the records of the negotiations with the Persian Government in 1901, he cannot find anything which goes to show that this point was foreseen and considered. It seems to me that article 11 of the convention might perhaps be considered as giving an indication how the case should be treated.

This article shows that the expenditure for erecting an additional wire from Tehran to Kashan is to be borne by the Persian Government in the manner provided by articles 2 and 4 of the convention. This reference to article 2 may perhaps be taken to imply that the expenditure incurred under this article is not to be included in the expenditure referred to in article 4. In article 2 the expenditure is for the direction and supervision of the work of constructing the telegraph line, for which purpose the British Government agreed to advance to the Persian Government the salaries and allowances of the men actually employed on the work. Nothing is said in this article how the amount advanced for salaries and allowances is to be repaid. The question, therefore, for settlement is whether the total amount of these advances is to be included in the capital cost of the line, or whether it is to be considered as outside the expenditure on which the capital cost of the line is to be calculated. In article 3 the British Government agrees to procure the material for the line and to transport it to the sites required, receiving payment for the same without interest, as hereinafter provided in the convention. There is therefore no doubt that the whole expenditure under this article is to be included in the capital cost of the line.

6. I attach a statement (Inclosure 2) which shows what it has cost to construct the Central Persia line from Tehran to the Indian frontier. It will be seen that if establishment charges under article 2 are included the cost of the line amounts to 131,519*l*. If the establishment charges are excluded the cost of the line for the purpose of determining the rental is reduced to 125,081*l*, and the difference, 6,438*l*, becomes a claim against the Persian Government for future settlement. According to article 4 of the convention, 4 per cent. on the capital expended on the construction of the Central Persia line is to be the rental of the line, three-quarters of this rental to be retained by the British Government to recoup them for the advances made. This does not appear to me necessarily to imply that the advances made under article 2 are to be included in the capital cost of the line.

The rental is subject to a minimum of 1,000*l*. per annum, but should the 1 per cent. on the capital cost of the line be more than this minimum, the excess is to be paid to the Persian Treasury. With regard to the question whether salaries and allowances of supervising establishment should be included in the capital cost of a telegraph line, I would state that in the Indian Telegraph Department no permanent establishment, nor temporary establishment engaged for general duties, is shown against estimates for works, but when the work is completed a percentage on the cash expended and on the book value of the stores used is added to cover the cost of the store-keeping and establishment charges, and the capital cost of the line is fixed when these percentages have been added. But the present case is not governed by the practice of the Indian Telegraph Department, but by the articles of the convention and a fair interpretation of them. If the supervising charges under article 2 are included in the capital cost of the line, the result will be that the Indo-European Telegraph Department will have to pay 4 per cent. per annum for thirty-three and one-third years on 6,438*l*. to the Persian Government retaining 3 per cent. of this payment to recoup it for the advance made. But this procedure would mean that for the advance made to the Persian Government under article 2 the department would pay to that Government during the thirty-three and one-third years a total sum of 2,146*l*, and at the end of that time the debt of 6,438*l*. would be considered as discharged. It appears to me perfectly fair and reasonable to adopt the view that the advance under article 2 should not be included in the capital cost of the Central Persia line, and that a separate claim should be made for its payment.

7. With regard to the question of rental of wire, I would point out that this department rents a wire from the Indian Telegraph Department over the section Rohat to Nok Kundi, 140 miles in length. This rental includes the cost of ordinary maintenance, and is at the rate of rupees 25*·*8 per mile per annum. The length of a wire from Tehran to the Indian frontier at Rohat is 951 miles, and the annual rental for this at the Indian rate above quoted would be 24,535 rupees, or 1,635*l*. For the two wires from Tehran to the Indian frontier, and for the third wire from Ardistan to the Indian frontier, 721 miles in length, the total rental at the same rate would amount to 4,510*l*. per annum. If the capital cost of the Central Persia line for the purpose of determining the rental to be paid to the Persian Government be taken at 125,081*l*, as I have proposed, the rental at 4 per cent. on this sum will amount to 5,000*l*. per annum approximately, which is not far from the rental calculated at the Indian telegraph rate. As the maintenance charges of the Central Persia line are to be paid by this department in addition to the rental, it appears to me that if the rental of the Central Persia line is fixed at 5,000*l*. approximately per annum the Persian Government can have no complaint to offer, more especially as the rental is calculated



on the cost of one wire from Tehran to the Indian frontier provided for the sole use of the Persian telegraph administration.

8. Under article 6 of the convention, there will be further claims against the Persian Government on account of the rental and purchase of buildings for telegraph stations, but it seems advisable that these claims should be dealt with in a separate account from the one to be submitted for the construction of the Central Persia telegraph line.

9. I would ask therefore—

(a.) If the cost of providing the third or Persian wire on the Central Persia line is to be included in the capital cost of the line, as explained in paragraph 3 of this memorandum.

(b.) If the second line with two wires from Tehran to Kashan may be considered as an extension of the Central Persia line from the Indian frontier to Kashan, and the charges for it treated in the same way (*vide* paragraph 4 of the memorandum).

(c.) If the charges incurred under article 2 of the convention are to form a distinct claim against the Persian Government, and are not to be included in the capital cost of the line on which 4 per cent. has to be paid under article 4.

10. If the proposals shown under (a) (b) and (c) are approved, I can prepare a bill for submission to the Persian Government on the lines of the rough draft (Inclosure 2) attached. It may, perhaps, be advisable not to present this bill until it is seen whether or not the assembly will ratify the agreement that has been come to with the Persian Government regarding the Arabistan lines and the renewal of our telegraph concessions up to 1945. It is possible that the Persian Government may dispute the correctness of the arrangement by which the charges under article 2 are not included in the capital cost of the line.

I wish to add to my reference, dated the 24th August, 1909, that I find that Mr. Finch, then director-in-chief of this department, telegraphed to Mr. Borker at Tehran on the 21st March, 1901, for communication to the British Minister, with regard to the Central Persia line, that the capital outlay will probably be 100,000*l*. But in preparing this estimate of the outlay Mr. Finch did not include any charges that came under article 2 of the convention. It may be reasonably concluded from this that these charges were not to be considered as coming into the capital outlay. Under article 4 this department obtains the lease of the telegraph line at a rental of 4 per cent. on the capital expended on its construction, which would appear to mean the amount of money actually spent with this object. The salaries of the permanent establishment paid under article 2 would have had to be paid whether the men were employed on the construction of the line or not, and cannot very well come under the definition of capital expended on the construction of the line.

#### Inclosure 2 in No. 130.

#### Rough Draft of Account to be rendered to Persian Government in connection with Cost of Central Persia Line.

Cost of providing materials for, and constructing, a telegraph line from Kashan to the Indian frontier under articles 1 and 3 of the convention between the United Kingdom and Persia, dated August 16, 1901—	Rs.	a.	p.	£
Cash charges .. .. .	8,97,707	12	8	59,847
Value of stores .. .. .	6,47,103	9	7	43,140
Total .. .. .	15,44,811	6	5	102,987
Cost of providing materials for, and constructing, a telegraph line from Tehran to Kashan under articles 2 and 10 of the above convention—				
Cash charges .. .. .	1,98,504	3	1	13,234
Value of stores .. .. .	1,32,899	11	11	8,869
Total .. .. .	3,31,403	15	0	22,094
Total cost of telegraph lines from Tehran to Indian frontier ..	18,76,215	5	5	125,081

15 rupees = £.

	£
Rental to be paid for the use and transit revenue of the Central Persia line, at 4 per cent. on the capital cost of 125,081 <i>l</i> , under article 4 of the convention, to be (per annum) ..	5,003.24
Or which 3 per cent. to be retained by the Indo-European Telegraph Department, or ..	3,752.43
And the balance to be paid to the Persian Government in two half-yearly instalments ..	1,250.81

	Rs.	a.	p.	£
Amount due from the Persian Government on account of advances made under article 2 of the convention for the salaries and allowances of the men actually employed in the direction and supervision of the work of constructing the Central Persia line from Tehran to the Indian frontier ..	96,561	4	11	6,438

[41478]

No. 131.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 483.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

SITUATION in Azorbaïjan.

St. Petersburg, November 11, 1909.

A force has been left by Rahim Khan in the citadel of Ardabil, and he himself has withdrawn and taken up his position with all the rest of his force outside the town in a fortified camp. While in Ardabil he paid a call on the Russian consul, and coupled with an expression of his fidelity to Russia a suggestion that those districts should be definitely occupied by Russia where his troops were now stationed. Further, the inhabitants of the town are, according to the Russian consul, desirous of becoming Russian subjects. M. Isvolsky observed that these proposals had, needless to say, all been rejected. He also told me that disturbances and troubles might arise at Tabreez, owing to friction between the governor-general and Sattar Khan.

[41479]

No. 132.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 484.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, November 11, 1909.

CONCESSION for navigation of Lake Urmia. Please refer to my telegram No. 478 of the 9th November.

This afternoon I remarked to M. Isvolsky that, in my opinion, he was labouring under a misapprehension in this matter. Imam Kuli Khan had already had the concession granted to him, and it was to be wished that an arrangement might be come to between him and the Russian Road Company, and if Mr. Stevens were engaged by them for the first few years this would also be advantageous. M. Isvolsky was evidently not conversant with the matter, but he assured me that what I had said would be borne in mind. M. Poklewski would, in any case, know what course of action had best be adopted.

[41475]

No. 133.

Sir G. Barendse to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 774.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 11, 1909.

EASTERN Azerbaijan.

M. Poklewski informs me that the troops which are being dispatched to Ardabil have instructions similar to those given to the detachment at Tabreez to refrain from all interference with the administration, but they are to repress plundering on the road from Astara, and to take action against caravans charged with plunder, and to raid stores of loot.

Troops are to be held in reserve on the frontier at Astara, but they will cross it only if the necessity arises.



[41476]

No. 134.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received November 11.)

(No. 775.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 11, 1909.*

M. POKLEWSKI informs me that Persian Government have asked his Government to supply them with 10,000 rifles and 2,500,000 cartridges for subsequent payment.

It is rumoured that a large body of gendarmerie is to be established, and my Russian colleague, who suspects that Germans may be invited by Persian Government to train this force, is suggesting to St. Petersburg that the transaction should be made conditional on the granting of an undertaking by the Persian Government to engage Russian instructors exclusively for any military force.

M. Poklewski, to whom I had already explained my proposal for the policing of the southern roads, raised no difficulty at the time, and he appears still to be of opinion that, as it aims at creation of a local force, it is compatible with the general undertaking he desires.

Russian Government will, I presume, ask you for my co-operation in this matter. In this case it would be advisable to make the necessary stipulations with regard to the proposed policing of Ispahan-Bashire road if the scheme set out in my telegram No. 772 of the 6th November has your approval.

[41422]

No. 135.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 482.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 11, 1909.*

PROVIDED that the Minister of Finance promptly and loyally fulfils the conditions to which he has given verbal assent, viz., that the sum of 30,000*l.*, taken from the mint, shall be restored, and that arrears of interest on the Government debt shall be paid up, the Imperial Bank of Persia are prepared to authorise an advance to the Persian Government of 500,000 toman on the security of the crown jewels jointly with the Russian Government.

Some assurance should be obtained that the above-named conditions shall be fulfilled by the Minister of Finance.

Reference is to my telegram No. 480 of the 10th November.

[41552]

No. 136.

*Mr. Stratford-Andrews to Foreign Office.*—(Received November 12.)

Sir,

*18, Old Broad Street, London, November 9, 1909.*

IN reply to your letter of the 6th instant, I have to inform you that at present it is only intended to form a syndicate for the purpose of sending an engineer to make a survey of the country between Bunder Aghas and Kerman.

Upon receipt of the engineer's report the syndicate will be able to decide, firstly, whether the undertaking is one that would be financially possible, and, secondly, how the undertaking should be worked.

It is unfortunately impossible at this stage to give the information you desire, namely, whether road tolls are to be levied and, if so, on what scale.

Those interested in the scheme are desirous to know whether the Foreign Office sees any objection to the scheme in principle before any further steps are taken.

I am, &amp;c.

T. W. STRATFORD-ANDREWS.

[41511]

No. 137.

*India Office to Foreign Office.*—(Received November 12.)

Sir,

*India Office, November 11, 1909.*

WITH reference to your letters dated the 23rd September and the 9th October, 1909, respectively, as to the suggestion made by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran that the consular guard at Shiraz should be maintained at its present strength, at any rate, until the end of next year, I am directed by Viscount Morley to enclose copy of telegraphic correspondence with the Government of India on the subject,\* and to state that he is willing to accept a moiety of the expenditure involved in this suggestion as a charge against Indian revenues.

He assumes that Secretary Sir E. Grey is satisfied that the condition referred to in the Treasury letter of the 25th September last is fulfilled, viz., that the measure is necessary for the purpose for which it was originally sanctioned, that of the safety of the British consulate.

I am, &amp;c.

R. RITCHIE.

[41582]

No. 138.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received November 12.)

(No. 776.)

(Telegraphic.) En clair.

*Tehran, November 12, 1909.*

MEETING of Medjliss is fixed for 15th November.

[41476]

No. 139.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1328.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 12, 1909.*

ROAD guards in Southern Persia.

M. Isvolsky should be informed of the substance of the proposals put forward by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran (see Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 772 and 775 of the 6th November and 11th November respectively). You should add that His Majesty's Government are examining these proposals. His Majesty's Government regard the question of the creation of road guards in Southern Persia as one calling for immediate consideration, and you should therefore make it clear to the Russian Government that it is most undesirable that our action in this matter should be in any way restricted by conditions which the Russian Government might impose on the Persian Government in connection with the proposed sale of rifles.

[41624]

No. 140.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received November 13.)

(No. 600.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 10, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit copy of an *aide-memoire* which I have received from M. Isvolsky, stating that the Russian Government are prepared to join in an advance to the Persian Government up to 200,000 toman, and that instructions have been sent to M. Poklewsky. The latter is also instructed to take the opportunity of obtaining the consent of the Persian Government to the cession for the navigation on Lake Urumia being accorded to the Russian Road Company, and the hope is expressed that Sir G. Barclay may be authorised to support his Russian colleague. No mention is made of Inan Kuli Khan, who, as I had previously explained to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is the actual holder of the concession and who is seeking for European partnership, but doubtless M. Poklewsky will know what steps he could most efficaciously take in the matter. M. Isvolsky mentioned to me that the Russian Government would indemnify Mr. Stevens.

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

\* To Viceroy, September 29; Viceroy, October 19, 1909.

Inclosure in No. 140.

*Aide-mémoire communiqué à Sir A. Nicolson by M. Ievolsky.*

DANS son aide-mémoire du 23 octobre (5 novembre), l'Ambassade de la Grande-Bretagne exprime le désir de savoir si le Gouvernement Impérial est disposé à autoriser la Banque d'Escompte et de Prête de Perse à aller au-devant d'une demande du Gouvernement persan, qui désire obtenir une avance d'argent et offre comme garantie du paiement les bijoux de la Couronne.

Le Gouvernement Impérial se déclare prêt à participer à la dite avance jusqu'à concurrence d'une somme de 200,000 tomanis, et le Ministre de Russie à Téhéran a été muni par télégraphe d'instructions en ce sens. M. Poklewsky a été invité en même temps à profiter de cette occasion pour tâcher d'obtenir le consentement définitif du Gouvernement persan à accorder à la Société de la Route de Tauris la concession de navigation sur le Lac d'Ourmiah. Le Ministre Impérial des Affaires Étrangères serait extrêmement reconnaissant à Sir Edward Grey de bien vouloir charger le représentant de la Grande-Bretagne à Téhéran de soutenir son collègue de Russie dans cette dernière question.

*Saint-Petersbourg, le 27 octobre  
(9 novembre), 1909.*

[41713]

No. 141.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 13.)*

(No. 777.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

NAVIGATION of Lake Urmia.

*Tehran, November 13, 1909.*

Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 484 of the 11th November. Following is the position: We have up till now opposed the granting of a concession to any persons backed by foreign money other than Russian. (Please refer to my telegram No. 758 of the 24th October.) M. Poklewski will now make the Persian Government undertake to recognise, as the condition on which the two banks agree to the joint advance, such arrangement as the road company may conclude with Imam Kuli for the exploitation of the concession held by the latter.

[39795]

No. 142.

*Foreign Office to India Office.**Foreign Office, November 13, 1909.*

Sir, I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo respecting the proposed retention in Persia of Lieutenant Wilson for four months after his relief at Mohammara for the purpose of examining the possibilities of effecting a connection between Bushire and the Jahrum-Alinabad-Firzabad route.

I am to state that, in Sir Edward Grey's opinion, the proposed survey would be advantageous, and that, if Viscount Morley concurs in this view and agrees that half the estimated cost of the work shall be borne by Indian revenues, he will approach the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury with a view to obtaining their sanction to charge the remaining moiety to Imperial funds.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[41925]

No. 143.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 15.)*

Sir,

*India Office, November 13, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 8th instant, forwarding for his remarks copy of a telegram from

His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, in which certain proposals for maintaining security on the Bushire-Isfahan route are put forward after consultation with Major Cox.

Viscount Morley observes that the scheme is estimated to cost 15,000l. a-year, and that it is proposed to meet it by a surcharge of 10 per cent. on import and export duties at the Persian ports of the Gulf, thus taxing trade at all the ports for the direct benefit of only one of them. Whether the European merchants who do business in the Gulf are likely to object to such a surcharge the President of the Board of Trade will be better able to inform Sir E. Grey than is Lord Morley. But his Lordship assumes that Sir George Barclay has satisfied himself that a more modest scheme (perhaps on the scale suggested by Mr. Bill in his letter of the 1st September last), the cost of which could be met by a charge on the trade of Bushire alone, would not be likely to be effective.

Subject to this remark, Lord Morley approves the scheme, and will arrange for the loan of six officers from the Indo-European Telegraph Department, if required. It is understood that no charge will be laid upon Indian revenues.

In order to legalise the surcharge a fresh convention or agreement with the Persian Government will apparently be necessary.

With reference to Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 775 of the 11th instant, I am to say that Lord Morley is strongly of opinion that—in the event of British support being asked for the proposal that the Persian Government should employ nine but Russian instructors for their gendarmerie—a reservation should be made regarding the policing not only of the Bushire-Isfahan road, but also of lines of communication such as that between Mohammara and Ahwaz, and of all roads within the British sphere of influence, such as Bandar Abbas-Kerman road, for the security of which it may hereafter be necessary to take special measures.

I am, &amp;c.

R. RITCHIE.

[41982]

No. 144.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)*

(No. 778.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 15, 1909.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

Foreign Office telegram No. 482 of the 11th November.

On the 12th November at a conference, at which the two Ministers and the two bank managers were present, it was agreed that the banks should each offer, when the Russian manager had received the authorisation for which he was applying to St. Petersburg, advance of 200,000 tomanis on the jewels, pledged as joint security, subject to the conditions here appended.

On behalf of the Imperial Bank of Persia it was stipulated that the profits of the Mint should be hypothecated for the prompt repayment of defalcation practised by the late mint-master; that a contract should be concluded for the supply of silver to the mint; that, for the payment of interest on Government debt, customs receipts of Mohammara should be assigned to supplement those of Bushire.

On behalf of the Russian Bank offer was made conditional on the Persian Government satisfying certain demands put forward by M. Poklewski. They are: (1) That motor vehicles should be admitted free for the exploitation of Resht-Tehran road; (2) that a concession of a copper mine in Karadagh, the working of which has been hindered by recent disorders, should be extended for a period of three years; (3) that Persian Government should undertake to make no objection to the transfer of the concession for the navigation of Lake Urmia to Russian subjects and to raise no opposition to any agreement made with Imam Kili, the present concessionaire; (4) that with regard to its debt to Russian Bank, on which interest is greatly in arrear, Persian Government should promise to open negotiations with a view to its consolidation.

[41967]

No. 145.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)*

(No. 779.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

EASTERN Azerbaijan.

*Tehran, November 15, 1909.*

Please refer to last sentence of Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 483 of the 11th November.

M. Ivolosky has, His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez informs me, sent instructions to his Russian colleague to bruit abroad that all fighting in the town would be stopped. Russian force would be increased, M. Ivolosky added, if it was not sufficient.

His Majesty's acting consul-general has been informed by governor-general that he proposes to send Sattar Khan to the capital, and he will compel him, if necessary by force, to obey as soon as the troops sent from Tehran arrive in Tabreez. Fighting is unlikely in the opinion of governor-general, since his collapse at Ardebil has discredited Sattar.

[41983]

No. 146.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)*

(No. 780.)

(Telegraphic.) En clair.

*Tehran, November 15, 1909.*

MEDJISS was opened by the Shah this afternoon.

[41511]

No. 147.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 484.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 15, 1909.*

SHIRAZ escort. Additional guards for British consulate.

The proposal in your telegram No. 737 of the 21st September sanctioned for so long as the safety of the consulate renders such guards, in your opinion, necessary.

[41969]

No. 148.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1329.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 15, 1909.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government. Please refer to telegram No. 777 of the 13th November from Tehran.

Please ascertain as soon as possible views of Russian Government on the following point: Imperial Bank of Persia informs us of a request made to them by the Persian Government that they should accept the security of the mint profits for a small separate advance of 70,000 toman, Russian conditions having rendered impossible a joint advance. Provided the Russian Government see no objection to this proposal, we would authorise bank to assent.

[40517]

No. 149.

*Foreign Office to Treasury.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 15, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to request that you will be so good as to submit to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury the following facts:

It was stated in my letter of the 1st February that for some considerable time the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, who are engaged in working the petroleum fields in the Arabistan province of Persia, had undertaken to maintain a small guard of Indian

sowars under Lieutenant Wilson of the Indian army. This guard was lent to them by the Government of India, and the expenses in connection with their pay, &c., were defrayed by the company. In the course of the summer of this year it became evident that the services of the guard were no longer required by the company, and it was decided, in principle, to withdraw them to India.

In the meanwhile Lieutenant Wilson, at the request of the Shohk of Moham-marah, had been engaged in examining certain irrigation projects at Nahr Hashim on the Karkhah River, and I am to transmit to you, for their Lordships' information, copy of his report on this subject.\* Sir William Willecks, the eminent irrigation expert, has expressed a favourable opinion of the projects indicated in these papers.

From paragraph 9 of Lieutenant Wilson's despatch to His Majesty's resident and consul-general at Bushire their Lordships will see that it was proposed that Lieutenant Wilson should be authorised to carry out later on in the year a detailed examination of the Nahr Hashim site.

On the 24th July Lieutenant Wilson assumed the duties of His Majesty's acting consul at Mohammarah, but he was also authorised to carry out the further survey work on the Karkhah River. In order that a part of the guard which had been lent to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company might be retained in Persia to keep communications open for Lieutenant Wilson between the Karkhah River and Mohammarah, it was ascertained that four men would be considered sufficient for this purpose, and that the cost of retaining them for this duty would amount to 20*l.* per month, and that their services might be required for a period not exceeding five months.

Sir Edward Grey caused the India Office to be informed that he approved the proposal in principle, and that, on being informed that the Government of India would bear a moiety of the expense involved, he would be willing to approach their Lordships with a view to obtaining their sanction for the payment of the remaining moiety out of Imperial funds.

It has now been informed that the Secretary of State for India in Council has sanctioned the charge in question against the Indian revenues on the understanding that their Lordships will accept the remaining moiety as a charge against British funds.

I am accordingly directed by Sir Edward Grey to recommend that their Lordships will sanction the expenditure proposed of one-half of 20*l.* per month for a period not exceeding five months.

I am also to state that it has been suggested that these four sowars, when the duty indicated above has been completed, should be retained as an escort for His Majesty's consul at Mohammarah. This proposal is still under consideration, and if Sir Edward Grey should eventually decide to approve it, a further communication on the subject will be addressed to you.

I am, &amp;c.

F. A. CAMPBELL.

[41991]

No. 150.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)*

(No. 200.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 27, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit a statement furnished me by the Administrator-General of the Customs showing what he describes as the fixed charges on the customs revenue for last year. It will be noticed that these amounted to 2,639,500 toman, or within 100,000 toman of the highest level reached by the customs nett revenue, viz., 3,011,038 toman in 1907-8. The Persian Government have recently undertaken liabilities in respect of the ex-Shah's pension—100,000 toman a year—and his debt of 2,100,000 toman to the Russian Bank, and they have promised to take over His Majesty's debt to Russian subjects amounting to some 100,000 toman. The debt to the bank is secured on the northern customs, and the Russian Government will doubtless insist on Mohammed Ali's pension and his debts to Russian subjects being similarly secured. This must involve a further charge of some 300,000 toman a year. Besides this there are other additional charges which the customs will have to bear.

\* Major Cox, No. 5, Commercial (27219), June 27 (in print).

M. Mornard's figure for interest due to the Imperial Bank of Persia does not, I believe, take into account certain debts of the Shah and of Naib-es-Saltaneh to the Imperial Bank which were taken over by the Persian Government last winter. These, with recent arrears of interest on the advances of the two banks and on our Government loan, and with a claim of the Imperial Bank of Persia of 150,000 toman against the late Mint-master which will have to be taken over by the Persian Government, will involve a further additional annual charge of certainly not less than 100,000 toman. If M. Mornard, therefore, were estimating to-day on the same basis as he has adopted in the enclosed list the annual charge which the customs revenue will henceforward be called upon to bear, he could not, I venture to think, count it at less than 3,100,000 toman, or 100,000 toman more than the highest level ever reached by the customs revenue, and 400,000 toman more than last year's net receipts—2,700,000 toman.

It is quite evident that on the basis of M. Mornard's statement no further borrowing is possible on the security of the customs, and although only the first four items are fixed charges by virtue of engagements undertaken by the Persian Government, the remaining eleven items being merely chargeable to the customs in accordance with usage, it would be difficult to relieve the customs of any of these latter. The Russian Government would doubtless object to any other security for the payment of the Cossack brigade, and it is important that the salaries of the European Government officers should be well secured. The rest of the eleven items mostly appertain to the Customs administration.

It is thus evident that a condition precedent for any further borrowing must be the conversion of the advances, &c., of the two banks, and even this would, as I calculate it, only leave sufficient margin for a very trifling loan unless it were found possible to relieve the customs revenue of some of these heads of expenditure which which it has hitherto been charged in accordance with usage.

The advances of the Imperial Bank of Persia and the Russian Bank carry for the most part interest at the rate of 12 per cent. and over. The debt to the two banks amounts, as I understand it, to between 8,500,000 and 9,000,000 toman, of which I would hazard an estimate that 7,000,000 toman carry interest at the rate of 12 or 15 per cent. The conversion of this debt and the reduction of the interest to 5 per cent. would effect a saving of probably 500,000 toman, in which case, supposing that the customs receipts do not fall below last year's level and for the first six months of this year they show an increase, there would be a margin for borrowing of 100,000 toman.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 150.

Statement by Administrator-General of Persian Customs.

#### DÉPENSES PRÉSUMÉES.

BUDGET des Dépenses gouvernementales assignées sur la Caisse des Domaines  
(Dépenses fixes).

	Sommes approximatives. Kraus.
1. Amortissement des emprunts de 1200-1202 (Banque d'Escompte) ..	9,500,000
2. Amortissement de l'emprunt du Chah (Banque Impériale) ..	1,250,000
3. Intérêts annuels des avances de la Banque d'Escompte ..	5,000,000
4. Intérêts annuels des avances de la Banque Impériale ..	4,000,000
5. Budget des Cossacks No. 1 ..	3,000,000
6. Budget des Cossacks No. 2 ..	420,000
7. Appointements et pensions des fonctionnaires européens ..	1,200,000
8. Services sanitaires (quarantaines, &c.) ..	200,000
9. Constructions et réparations des bâtiments gouvernementaux ..	120,000
10. Entretien et approvisionnement des huit bateaux à vapeur ..	300,000
11. Appointements aux troupes gardes-côtes (Golfes Persique) ..	100,000
12. Revenues annuelles dues au Gouverneur du Bouchir ..	200,000
13. Relevance pour le port et les bâtiments d'ancrage de Medjed Ser ..	120,000
14. Relevance pour le port et les bâtiments d'ancrage d'Avastar ..	125,000
15. Frais de transfert des fonds des bureaux du et (2 à 3 pour cent) ..	200,000
Total ..	26,395,000

Ce budget est établi d'après les obligations souscrites par le Gouvernement, en ce qui concerne les articles 1<sup>er</sup>, 2, 3, 4, et suivant l'usage en ce qui concerne les articles 5 à 15.

[42130]

No. 151.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)

(No. 491.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, November 16, 1909.

PLEASE refer to telegrams from Tehran, Nos. 778 of the 15th November and 781 of to-day, and to your telegram No. 1329 of yesterday. Proposed joint advance to Persian Government by the two banks in Tehran.

I have not yet discussed with M. Isvolsky the question raised in your telegram No. 1329, as Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 781 would seem to indicate that the previous negotiations have not broken down; and so when I saw his Excellency to-day I confined myself to enquiring what intelligence he had received as to the negotiations for a joint advance. The information which has reached M. Isvolsky is to the same effect as that contained in telegram No. 778 from Tehran.

[42131]

No. 152.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)

(No. 492.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, November 16, 1909.

OPENING of the Persian Medjlis.

I was told in conversation to-day by M. Isvolsky that on the above occasion a passage was (according to a telegram emanating from Wolff's bureau in Berlin), inserted in the Shah's speech from the throne, stating that Persian foreign relations were unclouded except for the fact that foreign troops were still within the borders of the empire. Such a proceeding on the part of the Persian Government was, in his opinion, an incorrect one, if the report was true. The text of the speech has not yet come into my possession, and I so informed M. Isvolsky.

[42132]

No. 153.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)

(No. 493.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, November 16, 1909.

PLEASE refer to your telegram No. 1328 of the 12th instant; project for policing Bushire-Ispahan route.

In accordance with your instructions, I have acquainted M. Isvolsky with the substance of Sir G. Barclay's proposals; and I was told by his Excellency in conversation this afternoon that the scheme now being considered would not give rise to any objection on his part. He is, however, of opinion that joint Anglo-Russian action in regard to roads both in the south and in the north would be the best course.

[42062]

No. 154.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)

(No. 781.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 16, 1909.

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

Foreign Office telegram No. 1329 of the 16th November to Sir A. Nicolson.

It appears premature to state that the joint advance has been rendered impossible by conditions imposed by Russia. The conditions have not officially been presented.

I am informed by manager of Imperial Bank of Persia that he reported the new proposal only to have authority in the event of the collapse of the joint negotiations.

[42133]

No. 155.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)*(No. 782.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.*Tehran, November 16, 1909.*

PLEASE refer to final paragraph of my telegram No. 774 of the 11th November. M. Poklewski informs me that the military authorities at Tiflis, in view of the unhealthy situation of Astara, wish the regiment to proceed to Ardebil. The question has been referred to St. Petersburg for discussion.

[40876]

No. 156.

*Foreign Office to Board of Trade.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 16, 1909.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to revert to my letter of the 8th instant, enclosing Sir G. Barclay's scheme for establishing road guards on the Bushire-Ispahan road.

I am to state that in Sir E. Grey's opinion the scheme, especially the point concerning the proposed surtax on import and export duties, will require mature consideration, and that he considers that the principal British firms trading in Persia should be consulted in regard to this point. I am to enquire if the Board of Trade could place themselves in touch with some representative firms in regard to this question and ascertain the view they would be likely to take on the subject of the proposed surtax.

I am, &amp;c.

F. A. CAMPBELL.

[42224]

No. 157.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received November 17.)*

Sir,

*28, Oxford Street, Manchester, November 16, 1909.*

IN accordance with the request of Sir Francis Campbell contained in his letter to us of the 12th instant, we hand you enclosed cheque on London for 7l. 10s. 4d. in payment of the cost of a telegram dispatched on the 4th instant to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, informing him that we propose to ship from 1,000 to 2,000 tons of oxide from the island of Hormuz, beginning about the 10th of this month. In making this payment we beg to point out that the cost of telegraphing one word to Tehran is 1s. 6d., and that if the amount given us of 7l. 10s. 4d. is correct, the telegram in question must have contained 100 words, which appears to us to be impossible. We should therefore be obliged if you would kindly look into the matter and refund us the amount overcharged.

We are, &amp;c.

ELLINGER AND CO.

[42233]

No. 158.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 17.)*(No. 783.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.*Tehran, November 17, 1909.*

M. POKLEWSKI has communicated to me following substance of a telegram received from his consul at Ardebil:

After two days' negotiations Rahim Khan and his men have withdrawn from the town. A religious service, at which both mullahs and Armenian priests officiated, was held to give thanks for the deliverance of the town, and afterwards a review was held of Russian detachments.

[42239]

No. 159.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 17.)*(No. 784.)  
(Telegraphic.) P.*Tehran, November 17, 1909.*

SHAH'S Speech from the Throne.

Please refer to Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 492 of the 16th November.

The following is a translation of the passage in speech which refers to foreign affairs:—

"We are happy that our friendly relations with foreign Powers are maintained, and we rejoice to see their sympathy with the progress of the new order of things, and we hope for the permanence of these sentiments in the future. We sincerely trust that, in view of the friendly discussions which are in progress, and of the good results apparent therefrom, the sorrow and sadness which is dominant in the mind of the people owing to the presence of foreign troops in Persia will shortly be removed."

I am informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the allusion to the troops was introduced for the purpose of stemming the growing agitation against their maintenance in Persia.

[41687]

No. 160.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 296.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 18, 1909.*

THE Russian chargé d'affaires called at the Foreign Office on the 8th instant and informed Mr. Mallet that he was instructed to state that the Russian Government found themselves obliged to send a battalion and a squadron of Cossacks to Ardebil with two machine guns and some engineers. The squadron, he said, must have arrived on the 7th. He hoped that this information would not be disagreeable to His Majesty's Government.

He was informed that His Majesty's Government had been prepared for some such necessity, and that they could not expect the Russian Government to stand by and do nothing while the lives of Russian subjects were in danger.

I am, &amp;c.

E. GREY.

[42130]

No. 161.

*Foreign Office to Imperial Bank of Persia.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 18, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to refer to your letter of the 15th instant respecting the proposed advance to the Persian Government, and to inform you that before giving his assent to any action on the part of the Imperial Bank of Persia, separate from that of the Russian Bank, he felt it necessary to ascertain how such action would be viewed by the Russian Government.

According to a telegram from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, it appears that the question of a joint advance by the two banks has not yet been definitely settled, and that, pending a decision, no action has been taken at St. Petersburg in reference to the proposed separate advance of 70,000 toman, though Sir A. Nicolson has been informed of the suggestion.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[42446]

No. 162.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 19.)*

(No. 785.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 19, 1909.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN advance to Persian Government.

In continuation of my telegram No. 781 of the 16th November, I have the honour to report that an offer of a joint advance of 400,000 toman was made yesterday by the two banks to the Persian Government. Conditions were laid down on behalf of the Imperial Bank of Persia, while the Russian Bank offered only to make the advance after M. Poklewski had given his assent. My Russian colleague will not authorise advance until he has obtained satisfaction on the four points reported in my telegram No. 778 of the 15th November. If the Persian Government demur as to these points, Russian Government would, I infer from M. Poklewski, probably object to the Imperial Bank making any advance to the Persian Government.

[41925]

No. 163.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1336.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, November 19, 1909.

ROAD guards in Southern Persia. Please see my telegram No. 1328 of the 12th instant.

The Bushire-Ispahan route should not alone form the object of any reservation which you make, but you should also make it include the Bakhtiari road and all roads coming within the British sphere in Persia.

[41427]

No. 164.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 136.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 20, 1909.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 496 of the 20th ultimo, I concur in the view expressed by yourself and by Major Cox that the telegraph facilities between London and Ardebil now afforded to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company may be allowed to continue until the control of the Ardebil telegraph lines is assumed by the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

I am, &amp;c.

E. GREY.

[42634]

No. 165.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)*

(No. 604.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, November 12, 1909.

I ENQUIRED of M. Isvolsky yesterday whether he had received my further news from Ardebil. He replied that his latest intelligence was that Rahim Khan had nominated a governor of the town, who had taken up his residence in the citadel with a certain number of men. The bulk of Rahim Khan's forces were assembled in a fortified camp close to the town. Rahim Khan had paid a visit to the Russian consul and had reiterated his demand for the surrender of those who had taken asylum in the consulate. He had also expressed his "fidelity" to Russia, and had suggested that that country should take over all the districts in Persia where her troops were located. The inhabitants of Ardebil, who were overjoyed at the arrival of the Russian troops, were now appealing to be made Russian subjects. M. Isvolsky said that it was unnecessary for him to tell me that all the above requests and suggestions had been refused.

I asked if Rahim Khan had returned to the subject of his march on Tehran. His Excellency said that he did not know if the Khan had again alluded to the subject. I said that I understood that a considerable and fairly well-equipped force was hastening

towards Ardebil from Tehran. His Excellency said that the two forces would probably come into collision, and if the Government troops were to win a victory it would be a satisfactory sign that the Persian Government were capable of re-establishing order with their own resources. If, on the contrary, Rahim Khan were to obtain the upper hand, he might march on Tehran or Tabreez with the prestige of success. It was necessary to retain the Russian troops at Kazvin until the issue of the conflict was decided. I did not contest this statement, firstly, because it would have been of no avail to do so, and, secondly, because it will be of advantage that when the Russian troops are withdrawn there should be little probability of any necessity arising for their return. If circumstances were to compel their return, it is possible that their stay might be an exceedingly prolonged one.

M. Isvolsky said that his news from Tabreez was not satisfactory. There were apparently serious dissensions between Sattar Khan and the fedais on the one hand and the governor-general on the other; and the Russian consul seemed to fear that disturbances might occur. His Excellency alluded vaguely to the possibility of the Russian Government having to reinforce the Russian troops there. I remarked that I believed that there were about 800 or 900 Russian troops at Tabreez, and I should have thought that this force was amply sufficient to afford all the necessary protection to Russian subjects and to foreigners.

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

[42637]

No. 166.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)*

(No. 609.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, November 16, 1909.

I ENQUIRED of M. Isvolsky yesterday whether he had any fresh news from Ardebil. He replied that the situation had undergone no material change, and no news had been received as to the forces which were advancing from Tabreez and Tehran. I asked if the Russian Government had any claims against Rahim Khan, as I had understood from him on a previous occasion that measures would be taken to enforce them. His Excellency said that Rahim Khan had recently settled all claims against him personally, though possibly he might have to be made liable for the plunder of the property of Russian subjects during the recent events. The Russian Government had still to settle accounts with two sections of the Shalshavans who had never punished, as they had promised, those who had been guilty of the murder of a Russian officer, and had never paid the indemnity to which they had agreed. It had not been decided whether punishment should be inflicted on them for their misdeeds now that some Russian troops had arrived at Ardebil. M. Isvolsky added that as soon as the situation had cleared up, the Russian troops could be withdrawn from Kazvin, but it was necessary to await the results of what occurred when the Persian troops arrived, and also to ascertain whether Rahim Khan intended to carry out his menace of marching on Tehran.

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

[42639]

No. 167.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)*

(No. 611.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, November 16, 1909.

IN accordance with the instructions conveyed to me in your telegram No. 1328 of the 13th instant, I explained to M. Isvolsky the substance of Sir G. Barclay's proposals relative to the measures which might be taken for establishing order and security on the Bushire-Ispahan road, and I left with his Excellency an *aide-memoire* on the subject, of which I have the honour to enclose a copy. This afternoon M. Isvolsky said that the Russian Government would make no objections to the scheme, but that he thought that the two Governments should take combined action both in regard to the northern and the southern roads. I am afraid that this suggestion, if acted upon, may not be very welcome to the Persian Government, and may perhaps render them less disposed to view the British project with favour. I did not inform his Excellency of

[1684]

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the procedure which Sir G. Barclay proposes to adopt in laying the matter before the Persian Government, as it seemed to me unnecessary to do so at this stage of the question, and I thought that it would be well to await the decision of His Majesty's Government on the project, and also to defer my observations which you may wish me to offer until I receive the reply of M. Ivolosky in writing. I merely said to him this afternoon that His Majesty's Government were examining the project of Sir G. Barclay.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 167.

*Aide-mémoire communicated to M. Ivolosky by Sir A. Nicolson.*

THE question of maintaining security on the Bushire-Ispahan roads has become an urgent one, and the British Government have now under their consideration certain proposals which have been submitted to them by the British Ministry at Tehran.

Sir G. Barclay is of opinion that the most effective means of ensuring the suppression of the continued depredations and brigandage which have rendered the above-mentioned trade route so unsafe would be the establishment of an efficient corps of road guards. He proposes that a force of 600 road guards should be raised locally, who would patrol the road by sections. These road guards would be organised and superintended by six officers, who would be lent by the Indo-European Telegraph Department. The force would be placed under the Ministry of the Interior, and not under the Ministry of War. It is estimated that the total cost ought not to exceed 15,000*l.* a year, and this expenditure might be met for a given period—say, for three years—by a surcharge of 10 per cent. on the import and export duties at the Persian ports of the Gulf. The traders interested in the matter would hardly object to this surcharge, as the present illegal levies and enhanced transport rates would cease as soon as the road guards were in a position to perform their duties effectively.

His Majesty's Embassy desires to inform the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the above project, which the British Government are at present examining.

His Majesty's Embassy has learnt that the Persian Government have applied to the Imperial Russian Government for the sale of a number of rifles and ammunition, and it is earnestly hoped that any conditions which the Imperial Russian Government may deem it desirable to impose on the sale of arms will not hamper any action which the British Government might desire to take in the way of creating road guards, who in reality will be merely a local police force. His Majesty's Embassy desires to express the confident hope that the Imperial Russian Government will view favourably the measures to which the British Government may wish to secure the consent of the Persian Government, in order that order and security may be re-established on an important trade route, as it is a matter of very urgent necessity that the present unsatisfactory condition of the southern roads should be remedied as soon as possible.

*St. Petersburg, November 2 (15), 1909.*

[42615]

No. 168.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)*

(No. 291.)

Sir,

*Tehran, October 30, 1909.*

SINCE my last review of the situation disturbances have broken out in eastern Azerbaijan, where Rahim Khan and the Shalhevans are seriously threatening Ardabil. Rahim Khan is stated to have given out that he is acting in the interest of Mohammed Ali, but his previous record tends rather to the supposition that it is a looting rather than a political movement. However this may be, the Persian Government are concentrating all their efforts to deal with this brigand chief. Mukhter-ess-Sultaneh has sent from Tabreez reinforcements to the number of 1,500 for Sattar Khan, who has with him ~~from 1,000, and a further force of 1,500, who are being dispatched from Tehran.~~ These latter troops should be a good fighting force, as they comprise, amongst others, a number of Persian Cossacks and of Bakhtiari, as well as some 300 Mujaheddin

(nationalist volunteers who fought under Sipahdar at the time of the revolution) commanded by Ypiri, who was the leading spirit in Sipahdar's force, and has since been doing excellent work as chief of police in the capital. What is perhaps more to be desired, however, than the dispatch of troops is a clear understanding on the part of the Shalhevans and Rahim Khan's men that Rahim Khan does not enjoy Russian sympathy, and that, in the event of Russian intervention being necessary, he will be made to bear the consequences of his misdeeds. Some two months ago, as I have reported by telegraph, a small Russian force was sent to his district from Tabreez, accompanied by a consular officer, with the object of exacting compensation for injury to Russian interests. This object was achieved, but that the expedition should have been followed shortly after by Rahim Khan's active rebellion has given rise to the suspicion that the purpose of the expedition was other than the recovery of plunder. Such a suspicion was perhaps inevitable among a people always ready to attribute their troubles to Russian intrigue, but the Russian acting consul-general would have done better to avoid intercourse of any kind with Rahim Khan. The mission to this brigand chief was imprudent, to say the least of it, as was also the dispatch of the doctor of the Russian consulate-general a little later in order to treat him for an attack of dysentery, for however absurd the suspicion that Russia is inciting Rahim Khan to disorder may be, his intercourse with the Russian consulate-general may easily be made by him to appear as an indication of Russian sympathy. The Russian doctor was instructed to urge him to keep quiet, but, as a member of the Government said to my Russian colleague, Rahim Khan probably gave out amongst his followers that he brought messages of good-will from the Russian consulate-general. Since then M. Miller has been instructed to convey to him a warning that he will be held personally responsible for any injury to Russian interests wrought by his tribesmen or the Shalhevans. It is to be hoped that this message will facilitate the task of Reshid-ul-Mulk, who, as reported in my telegram No. 761, has been sent by Mukhter-ess-Sultaneh to negotiate with a view to a peaceful settlement.

Except for Ardabil, my information shows that the state of public order in the provinces is relatively satisfactory. Seyyid Hussein Lari has been summoned to Tehran, and I have heard no more of Lingah's being exposed to danger from this turbulent seyyid. The Yezdikasht district, on the border of the provinces of Fars and Ispahan, is suffering from the depredations of the Kuhgeluis, and at this point traffic is held up on the Shiraz-Ispahan road, but, apart from this, the state of the southern roads shows some improvement. The roads from Yazd to Ispahan and Kerman are now open to traffic, and it is reported that caravans have recommenced running on the road from Bushire to Shiraz, though I learn this morning that the Kashihs are blocking the road between Kazerun and Shiraz.

In Tehran there is no sign of any trouble, and the Resht road seems to be no less safe than it always has been. Early in the period under review there was some discontent amongst a number of the Mujaheddin. The meetings of some sixty or seventy of these to protest against the alleged misappropriation of funds by Sipahdar gave occasion for almost riotous, but the movement was entirely pacific, and there was never any ground for apprehending trouble. Sipahdar, the Prime Minister, visited one of their meetings and apparently satisfied the malcontents, for there have been no more of these miniature demonstrations. The situation of the Government remains apparently what it was four weeks ago. On the surface the advanced Nationalists seem to be co-operating with the Government, and indeed one of them, Vnsak-ed-Dowleh, has joined the Cabinet as Minister of Justice in the place of Farman Fama, who is said to have resigned in the hope of getting a better post in the next Ministry. Nevertheless, the opinion is general that when the Mejliss meets a determined attempt will be made to upset the Ministry. More than sixty deputies are said to be now in Tehran. A quorum for the meeting of the Mejliss is sixty-one, but it will not open until there is sufficient margin; taking into account the possibility of some of the elections being found to have been irregular, a fortnight may therefore elapse before the Assembly meets.

I am happy to say that my Russian colleague has recommended the withdrawal of the bulk of the Russian troops from Kavin. It is to be hoped that the Russian Government will be guided by his advice. I feel that it may well be a case of "now or never," for if the Mejliss meets before the force at Kavin has been reduced, I regard as inevitable an anti-Russian agitation which would make it very difficult for Russia to withdraw her troops. The good impression which the reduction of her force at Tabreez was expected to produce has been, if noticeable at all, merely momentary, and there is already a good deal of clamour in the press. The agitation, however, has not

yet assumed such proportions as to make a withdrawal of the troops from Kazvin difficult for Russia's *amour-propre*, and there is still time for her to take this step with a good grace.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

P.S. October 31.—Since writing the above I have learned from my Russian colleague that his Government have decided to withdraw the bulk of the Kazvin force. Sixty men are to be left at Kazvin, and between 400 and 500 are to remain for the moment at Resht and Enzeli. At the same time that M. Poklewsky gave me this information I received Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 462 to you, in view of which I have not reported by telegraph.

G. B.

[42616]

No. 169.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)

(No. 202.)

Tehran, November 4, 1909.

Sir, I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia for the past four weeks.

I have, &c.  
G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 169.

No. 11.—Summary of Events in Persia for four weeks ending November 4, 1909.

Tehran.

YOUSOUK-ED-DOWLEH, a prominent Nationalist, has succeeded Prince Farman Farma as Minister of Justice. This appointment is a new departure, as Yousouk-ed-Dowleh has so far never held Ministerial office.

2. Nasr-ul-Mulk arrived at Tehran on the 30th October.

3. In consequence of the alarming news received from Ardebil respecting the activity of Iftakim Khan and the Shamsiyan tribe a force of Cossacks and "Mujadidiah" has left for that place, and more are to follow. M. Yezren, the chief of police, is to command the latter, but has not left yet.

4. Various methods are being adopted for the purpose of increasing the revenue. A contract has been given to a syndicate for the supply of meat in Tehran, the royalty on which will, it is hoped, bring in 120,000 tomans a-year. The Police Department is being run on the revenue derived from taxes on public vehicles, alcohol, opium, &c.

5. Majd-ul-Islam, the editor of the "Nedni Vatan" newspaper, who was tried and sentenced to five years' deportation for reactionary intrigues, has been pardoned and released.

6. Of the numerous newspapers at present published at Tehran, the "Iran-i-Nau" and the "shary" are the most important. Of late their pages have been filled with somewhat violent attacks on Russia chiefly with regard to the presence of Russian troops in Persia. The considerable reduction effected lately at Tabreez did not cause any abatement of this campaign, but the decision of the Russian Government to withdraw the Kazvin force will undoubtedly have a good effect.

7. The press announces that the total amount so far collected by forced subscriptions is a little over 200,000 tomans (40,000*l.*), of which half was paid by the Zils-Sultans.

8. The Government is still of a provisional nature pending the convocation of Parliament, and the Ministers are assisted by the committee, which has periodical sittings to discuss matters of public interest. The proceedings of this committee are published in the press, and these accounts seem to show that the committee acts as a provisional Parliament. Foreign and internal politics are discussed and the acts of the Ministers are criticised, and general supervision over the Government is exercised in a somewhat informal manner.

9. There is a general feeling of distrust towards Sipahdar and Serdar Assad, and it is hoped that they will resign office when the Medjlis meets.

10. There are about sixty-four deputies in Tehran, which is just over the necessary quorum of sixty-one, but there is as yet no sign of the convocation of Parliament. It is said that the credentials of some of the provincial candidates are probably not in order and it is preferred to wait for a substantial majority in order to be certain of a quorum. The Parliament building, moreover, which was nearly wrecked by the bombardment of 1908, is still undergoing repairs and does not appear to be nearly ready. It is hoped, however, that the House will sit before the end of November.

11. An incident occurred on the 26th October at the auction of Amir Bahadur's property, which is being held under the supervision of the Russian Legation. Police officers came while the auction was in progress and stated that they had orders to stop proceedings as no auctions could take place without Government permission. An angry altercation ensued between Amir Bahadur's representative (a Russian subject) and the police, but the auctioneers and other Persians present fled out crying: "Long live the constitution—we obey the police." The Russian Legation insisted on, and obtained, an apology for this affront.

12. Captain Petzel, attaché to the German Legation, is constantly consulted by Sipahdar on military matters.

G. P. CHURCHILL.

Tabreez.

1. The nineteen members of the National Assembly for Azerbaijan have been elected. They are, on the whole, men of integrity, and, if led properly by capable party leaders, should become a useful force for reform. Five of them, including Taki Zadeh and Mustafar-ed-Dowleh, were members of the former National Assembly. Only four lesser notables are included in the nineteen; this is indicative of the eclipse of clericalism, perhaps the most significant feature of the election. Seventeen of the nineteen members belong to Tabreez itself; it is regretted that the outlying parts of the province are not better represented, but this is to some extent due to the electoral law itself. In the opinion of the governor-general the system of direct election would have secured a juster and wider representation in Azerbaijan. Soufialak, apparently owing to Turkish obstruction, took no part in the elections.

2. With the exception of the Ardebil district Azerbaijan has remained quiet. The trouble at Ardebil is due to Rahim Khan, who, immediately after the withdrawal of the Russian detachment from Alhar, collected a force, and at the same time instigated the Shahsevyans, some of whose chiefs had already made terms with the new Government, to rebellion. The combined forces led by the 22nd October, practically surrounded Ardebil, and a good deal of fighting took place. The telegraph-lines were cut, so that news was much delayed. The governor-general took immediate steps to collect a force to relieve Sattar Khan, who, with 1,000 men, is in Ardebil, and by the 28th October Bagher Khan, with 1,500 cavalry and infantry, had started from Tabreez, while Samad Khan, at Margha, had 800 men ready to march when ordered. The governor-general had meanwhile dispatched Reshid-ul-Mulk, with 100 Persian Cossacks, to Sarab to negotiate with the rebels. Reshid-ul-Mulk took with him a letter from the Russian consul-general, informing him that he would be held personally responsible for harm to Russian life or property. M. Miller also instructed the Russian vice-consul at Ardebil to convey this message to Rahim Khan. In another letter sent by Reshid-ul-Mulk M. Miller said he knew Rahim Khan had instigated the Shahsevyans, and he would hold him responsible for the damage done by them. It is hoped that these communications, which are the outcome of instructions received by M. Miller from the Russian Minister at Tehran, may have a good effect. The governor-general informed Mr. Smart privately that unless the Russians abstained from encouraging Rahim Khan and the Shahsevyans a catastrophe involving Russian intervention a second time was inevitable. The Government forces contain a large reactionary element at present loyal to the new régime, but if this element gets the idea that the rebels are backed by the Russians it may not remain loyal. From Tehran a force of 1,600 men of all arms with three guns has been dispatched to Ardebil under the command of M. Yezren, chief of police.

3. Two hundred Persian Cossacks with four guns from Tehran and 200 Hunloo horsemen from Zinjan, intended to form the governor-general's escort, arrived on the 23rd October.

[1684]

2 G



4. The reduction of the number of Russian troops in Azerbaijan was begun on the 17th October, when one field battery and two companies of infantry left Tabreez for Russia. They were followed on the 19th by two companies of infantry, half company of sappers, and some men and horses of the mountain battery, which was reduced to a peace footing. General Snarski and his staff left on the 21st October. On the 23rd October the Russian consul-general stated that there remained 1,100 men at Tabreez, 100 infantry at Urumia, and 100 Cossacks at Ardebil. The Russian Minister at Tehran gave the figure at Tabreez as 1,000.

#### Kazvin.

One thousand six hundred Russian troops are still at Kazvin, and detachments have been placed at each stage on the Resht road during the past month. The Russian Government has now decided to withdraw all but sixty men from Kazvin and 400 from Resht and Enzeli.

#### Resht.

Quiet has prevailed. The governor-general and the local assembly are said to have disagreed, but there has been no open rupture. Some Persian Cossacks having reached Resht from Tehran, many of the Caucasian volunteers have been dismissed.

#### Zinjan.

Negotiations between the Government and Mollah Kurban Ali were prolonged to nearly the end of October, but a satisfactory arrangement was then arrived at, and the Governor has reached Zinjan and assumed his duties.

#### Meshed.

1. The district appears to have remained quiet, although neither the Governor-General nor the local assembly is credited with possessing much authority. A growing scarcity of money and employment is reported. As a result of strong orders from the Minister of the Interior, the local "volunteers" have stored some of their arms, but they still appear armed in the streets. The Russian consul-general at the beginning of October wrote a strong note to the local Foreign Office agent attacking the governor-general.

2. M. Petrov, who has been appointed Russian consul at Kerman, arrived on the 4th October, and left on the 6th for Kerman.

3. Major Sykes left for Krasnovodsk on short leave on the 14th October.

#### Turbat-i-Haideri.

1. Eight Russian Cossacks arrived from Kerman on the 13th September *en route* for Russia via Karez. On the 16th eight, whose destination was unknown, arrived from Russia. On the 19th ten arrived from Russia. On the 25th eight arrived from Seistan for Russia, and on the 9th October eight from Kerman for Russia.

2. On the 23rd September a large caravan arrived from Yazd escorted by fifty sowars. This was the first caravan to get through for a long time, and its arrival caused great satisfaction to the merchants.

3. Lieutenants Makharof and Ivantchenko arrived from Meshed on the 22nd September. They were students of the St. Petersburg Academy of Oriental Languages, and had been granted three months' study leave to Persia.

4. The Russian officer at Karez left in the first week of October for Pul-i-Khatun.

#### Seistan.

During August 3,313 cases were treated and 54 operations performed in the consular hospital.

2. The situation has remained unchanged and quiet prevails.

#### Birjand.

Shankat-ul-Mulk, on reappointment to the governorship of Kain, assumed office on the 20th September. There were rumours that Hishmat-ul-Mulk's Bahadris would create trouble, but Shankat-ul-Mulk took precautions, and there have been no disturbances.

#### Ispahan.

The town and district have remained undisturbed. Samsam-es-Saltaneh has expressed a desire to resign the governorship, but his sincerity in this is open to question. He is known to be on bad terms with the other Bakhtiari khans, who accuse him of refusing to share the emoluments of Ispahan with them as agreed. All the roads appear to be safe excepting that near Yezlikaast, on the Shiraz road, there has been an incursion of Kigielis, who have robbed several caravans and plundered villages. The Persian Cossacks, *en route* for Shiraz, who left Ispahan on the 17th October, have also been held up by them north of Yezlikaast. A force of Bakhtiaris has been dispatched to clear the road.

2. On the 7th October MM. Dmitrieff and Nikitine, of the Russian consulate-general, left for St. Petersburg.

#### Kashan.

Naib Hussein (see last summary) is still at large, but forces are in motion against him. The Persian authorities at Ispahan have requested that he may be refused admission to the consulate-general should he try to take refuge there.

#### Sultanabad.

Mr. Strauss, acting vice-consul, reports that the people of the province of Iraq are being driven to despair by the Bakhtiaris. Complaints of the plundering of the Kasas district by Hussein Khan Zarghan, Bakhtiari, having reached Tehran, the Minister of the Interior directed his brother, Haji Khosru Khan, to proceed from the Bakhtiari country to Iraq, to punish the offenders and restore the plunder to its owners. Khosru Khan went to Iraq and about the 13th October telegraphed to Tehran that he had carried out his instructions. This, Mr. Strauss says, is not the case. He states that Haji Khosru Khan joined forces with Hussein Khan Zarghan, and plundered some villages and two Lur tribes, and that large flocks of sheep have been driven off to the Bakhtiari country. His Majesty's Minister has drawn the attention of the Minister of the Interior to Mr. Strauss' report and the Minister has promised to enquire into the truth of the statements made in that report. In Sultanabad itself a leading priest who, according to Mr. Strauss, enjoys the support of the Bakhtiaris, is tyrannising the people. The present governor appears to be worse than useless.

#### Yezd.

On the 28th September the suburban Pursee village of Qasimabad was raided by Taftis who beat men and women and carried off three men besides much plunder. The prisoners were subsequently released after some ill-treatment on payment of a ransom. On the 29th the inhabitants of Qasimabad and a number of Pursee priests, merchants and others from the town took refuge in the vice-consulate against the oppression of the Taftis, who were at the time very active all round Yazd, raiding the villages and plundering the people. They remained in refuge until the 19th October when the new governor, Sardar-i-Jang, Bakhtiari, arrived and assured them that they should be protected and the Taftis punished. The new governor's arrival has had a very good effect on the situation and the roads are now open and safe.

#### Kermanshah.

1. A reconciliation between the two factions in the town has been effected through Daoud Khan, the Kalhur chief. He is to preserve order outside the town, and a commission of notables inside. The governor having received no troops from Tehran has informed the Central Government that he accepts no responsibility. Rumours of dissensions at Tehran have had a disturbing effect and until affairs at the capital are constituted on a firm basis no progress is to be expected in local affairs. Daoud Khan has been appointed by the Central Government "chief of the tribes." He collected the chiefs, who swore to act with him. It is said that he advised them to avoid paying taxes and to make raids, but not to attack pilgrims or merchants' goods. If the new regime prove permanent and he is called on to restore order, he will reply that this can only be done if the chiefs are paid to establish a police force.

2. Most of the property taken in the robbery reported in last summary was restored to its owners.

## Kerman.

1. The town and district have remained quiet. Rafat-i-Nizam was summoned to Tehran from Bam, whereupon the people of Bam closed their shops and took refuge in the telegraph-office, protesting that they would not let him go, as he was protecting them against the raids of the Baluchis. He, however, started for Tehran on the 25th September.

2. All the Baluchi chiefs are said to have made peace among themselves, each keeping to his own fort and district; but they have sworn on the Koran to join together to oppose any attempt of the Persian Government to retake Baluchistan.

## Shiraz.

1. The new governor-general, Saham-ed-Dowleh, has displayed extraordinary energy in putting into order the administration of the province. He has established a number of bureaux each with a definite task—e.g., Justice, Police, Army, Revenue, Tribal Affairs—and insists on the work of these bureaux being done. He has reduced Nasr-ed-Dowleh to abject submission, and compels him to accompany him in all his official work. He signified his arrival by hanging a well-known ruffian who was in the personal employ of Nasr-ed-Dowleh. This, combined with exemplary punishments in other cases, has helped to establish his authority. For the moment all opposition is paralysed, but the governor-general has made many enemies—especially the clergy—and His Majesty's consul considers that it will be a miracle of successful bluff if he manages to maintain himself. He has already made some progress in the settlement of British claims. The general situation may be summed up as follows: The governor-general has frightened everyone with whom he has come in personal contact, mainly by his perfect self-confidence and perfect ignoring of all difficulties, but it seems unlikely that the same impression will be produced by his lieutenants in other parts of the province, and it remains to be seen whether his authority will survive the first serious check which it may receive, unless he receives reinforcements of some kind with which the inhabitants are not too familiar. The unknown factor in the situation is the attitude of the tribes towards the new régime. Hearing that the extreme party amongst the Constitutionalists were in communication with Soulat-ed-Dowleh, Mr. Bill, after consulting the local Foreign Office agent, wrote to Soulat-ed-Dowleh, reminding him of his promise to support any governor except Ala-ed-Dowleh, and urging him to support the governor. Before receiving this letter Soulat sent in one of his adherents with a letter of introduction to Mr. Bill asking that he might be treated with full confidence. Mr. Bill informed the governor of this verbally, and told him the reply which he intended to make, emphasising the fact that it was only in the absence of any properly-constituted authority that he had been compelled to enter into somewhat unusual relations with the nomad chief. The governor fully accepted the situation, and dismissed the position of Soulat-ed-Dowleh with apparent frankness. He said that he had no prejudices on the subject, that the Government in Tehran had been in favour of the dismissal of Soulat, but he had urged the desirability of giving him a chance, and that as long as he kept the Kishkais quiet he had no quarrel with him, but if he failed to do so he would be dismissed in the same way as any other failure. Soulat's emissary visited the consuls on the 6th October. He began by hinting that the new régime was too good to last, but, on being pressed for a definite message, said that Soulat had full confidence in the new governor-general personally, but knew that Sardar Assad was his enemy, and the friend of the Kaxamis, and he could not help being uneasy when he saw Kawan-ul-Mulk Governor of Kerman and Nasr-ed-Dowleh the governor's right-hand man. He was reassured on the latter point; it is, indeed, quite clear that the governor has Nasr-ed-Dowleh under his thumb. Mr. Bill also repeated his exhortation to Soulat-ed-Dowleh to make his words good by loyally supporting the new régime; and the chances of this seem good on the whole, although considerable pressure will probably be brought to bear in the opposite sense. Soulat will, of course, deserve no consideration whatever if he listens to the latter, but there can be no doubt that the difference in the fortunes of the Ilkhans, of the Baktiaris, and Kishkais ranks with him. He continues to approach Shiraz very slowly, but this is natural, as he is accompanying the regular migration.

2. As the arrival of Seyid Abdul Hussein Lari, who has been summoned to Tehran at Shiraz might lead to disturbances Mr. Bill considers it best that the reinforcement of the consular guard should remain there until either troops arrive from Tehran, or Fars is guaranteed safety from the Seyids.

## PERSIAN GULF.

## Bushire.

3. Haider Khan of Kamanj, has died of a wound inflicted by one of his servants and his followers have left Kazerun. The road between Kazerun and Konarakhteh is reported to be most unsafe. It is said to be in the hands of Kashiği tribesmen, who are reported to be engaged in plundering. This recurrence of disorder is unfortunate as caravans were once more just beginning to use this route to Bushiro.

1. The local assembly has continued to meet two or three times a week, but does not appear to have transacted any business of importance. At the instigation of the agent of Seyid Abdul Hussein Lari it telegraphed to Tehran endeavouring to show that the Seyid was a Nationalist and innocent of the charges of robbery, &c., brought against him. In reply it was enjoined not to interfere in the matter.

2. The French vice-consul, having been recalled to France, His Majesty's acting-consul-general has temporarily taken charge of French interests at Bushiro.

## Lingah.

On the 30th September a telegram was received at Bushiro from His Majesty's consul at Bunder Abbas, stating that he had received a report from the residency agent at Lingah, to the effect that Seyid Abdul Hussein Lari had taken Basteek, that the inhabitants of Lingah were panic-stricken, and many were leaving the place. The governor-general, who was at Bunder Abbas, assumed Captain Idef that the town would be safe, as he was sending the "Persepolis" with troops to defend it.

## Mohammerah.

1. The guard of Indian troops, which has been at the oil-works for the past two years, left Persia on the 24th September, except four men who remain as a personal guard to His Majesty's consul at Mohammerah.

2. Fakhr-ul-Mulk, the new governor of Arbabistan, assumed office at the end of September. His arrival coincided with the recurrence of robberies on the Shuster-Dizful road, where the Sagwand tribe looted 700 animals and their loads. The governor appears to be powerless. Sardar Arfa was requested by the Central Government to continue *de facto* governor of Arbabistan, as he was when Haji Saif-ed-Dowleh was governor. He replied that he could not undertake to do this, and that, Fakhr-ul-Mulk having been appointed without consulting him, the responsibility of governing Arbabistan must be with him only. Sardar Arfa has now withdrawn his nominees from Shuster and Dizful, and a recurrence of trouble there is to be expected. He resents greatly receiving enquiries and instructions from Sardar Assad as Minister of the Interior.

3. M. Zwinno continues his policy of introducing a new and stricter régime in the administration of the customs, and his action is arousing widespread resentment.

4. Messrs. Wackelmuhs and Co.'s Mohammerrah agent, M. Carstens, having died, his place has been taken, temporarily at all events, by Mr. Randles, an Englishman, aged about 22, fresh from Hamburg, and unable to speak any language but German and English. He does not seem to possess any particular capacity for commercial dealings nor to be greatly attached to the firm.

5. Mr. E. B. Soane, late of the Imperial Bank of Persia, who has been travelling and living in disguise in Sulaimanial and Kurdistan in order to investigate linguistic problems on behalf of an Oriental society in England, arrived at Mohammerrah on the 24th September.

C. B. STOKES, Major,  
Military Attaché.

[41925]

No. 170.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 22, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant respecting Sir G. Barclay's and Major Cox's scheme for maintaining security on the Bushire-Ispahan road, and to inform you that, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, the scheme will require mature consideration, and that the arrival of Sir G. Barclay's despatch on the subject and Major Cox's return to London should be awaited before any definite decision as to its adoption can be reached. In the meanwhile the Board of Trade have been consulted as to these proposals, and they have been requested to communicate with British firms trading with Persia in order to ascertain what their views are likely to be as regards the proposed surtax of 10 per cent. on export and import duties in the Persian Gulf, which appears to Sir E. Grey to be the most contentious point in the scheme.

Viscount Morley will have seen from the telegram to Sir A. Nicolson of the 12th instant (a copy of which is enclosed for convenience of reference<sup>6</sup>) that a reserve with regard to road guards in Southern Persia has already been made to the Russian Government in regard to the proposal that the Persian Government should employ none but Russian officers for their gendarmerie. A further telegram has now been dispatched to him, making it clear that this reserve must cover the Bakhtiari road and any road within the British sphere of influence, as well as that running from Bushire to Shiraz and Ispahan.

I am, &amp;c.

F. A. CAMPBELL.

[42960]

No. 171.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 756.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 23, 1909.*

I AM informed by M. Poklewski that Russian Government understood that the employment of military officers was contemplated under the proposed scheme for maintaining order on the Bushire-Ispahan road. Russian Minister has informed his Government that this is an error, but from a telegram which he has since received it appears that they still misinterpret the scheme.

According to the proposal of Major Cox and myself, the Indo-European Telegraph Department was to second a certain number of telegraph officers to be employed for the purpose.

[42961]

No. 172.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 23.)*

(No. 357.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Constantinople, November 23, 1909.*

SOCIÉTÉ du Tonbaue.

This company is for practical purposes a department of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and it is not in our power to bring our influence to bear upon it as suggested in Tehran telegram No. 760 (repeated to me in your telegram No. 685 of the 29th ultimo).

The Russian Ambassador is hopeful of obtaining the renewal, on equal terms, of the contract with the Russian steamer company, while the manager of the Société du Tonbaue says that they will take the best offer made to them, the question of the renewal being therefore simply one of terms.

The present contract has still a year to run.

[43003]

No. 173.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 24.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 19th November, relative to the Shiraz escort.

*India Office, November 23, 1909.*

Inclosure in No. 173.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*India Office, November 19, 1909.*

PLEASE see your telegram of the 19th October last as to affairs at Shiraz. His Majesty's Minister at Tehran has been informed under date the 15th November that the proposal made by him has been sanctioned for so long a time as he is satisfied that, for the safety of the British consulate, additional guards are necessary.

[43079]

No. 174.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(No. 788.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 24, 1909.*

NAVIGATION of Lake Urumia.

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 761 and 777 of the 2nd November and the 13th November respectively, I have the honour to report that Stevens, having practically come to an agreement with the road company, is leaving Tabreez for Soujbonlak in order to try to persuade Imam Kuli to make terms with the company.

After consultation with my Russian colleague, I have authorised His Majesty's acting consul-general to proceed to Soujbonlak, as Mr. Smart was of opinion that his presence there would materially aid negotiations, and I have instructed him to use every effort to bring about an arrangement which the Russians approve. He will be away for some three weeks, during which period the consulate-general will be in charge of Stevens's father.

[43078]

No. 175.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)*

(No. 789.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 24, 1909.*

SITUATION in Eastern Azerbaijan.

In continuation of my telegram No. 774 of the 11th November, I am informed by His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez that Ardebil has been occupied by 3,200 Russian troops. The regiment which I reported was to be held in readiness at Astara is evidently included in this force. M. Poklewski has not been informed that it has reached Ardebil, but his consul has announced the arrival of its colonel. Instructions had been sent to the regiment to remain at Astara, Russian Minister tells me.

The prompt withdrawal of the troops stationed at Kazvin is now more than ever to be desired in consequence of this new development. Rahim Khan cannot be regarded now as a danger, even by extreme alarmists.

[43119]

No. 176.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 25.)*

Sir,  
IN reply to your letter dated the 13th November, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the view of Secretary Sir E. Grey as to the desirability of examining the possibilities of effecting a connection between Bushire and the Jalrum-Aliabad-Firazabad route.

On learning that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury will accept as a charge against British revenues a moiety of the estimated expenditure stated in my letter of the 28th October last, he will inform the Government of India that their proposals are approved.

I am, &c.  
R. RITCHIE.

[43153]

No. 177.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)*

(No. 496.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburg, November 25, 1909.*  
RUSSIAN troops in Persia. Please refer to telegram No. 739 of to-day's date from Tehran.

When I saw M. Isvolsky this afternoon, his Excellency told me that the Kazvin force was to be reduced by 300 men, who were to return to Russia. He also said as regards the situation at Ardebil that the question was under the consideration of the Russian Government of how those Shahsevens were to be treated who had plundered and committed other crimes; some punishment might possibly be necessary. As regards the report to the effect that the Persian Government forces had inflicted a defeat on the rebels, he had no official news on the subject. It was always the intention of the Russian Government that the force sent to Ardebil should be of considerable size, but it may be assumed that as soon as the authority of the central Government has been re-established in that neighbourhood, and when the Shahsevens have been dealt with, the Russian troops will be withdrawn from the town. I will make enquiries of his Excellency as to their exact numbers.

[43169]

No. 178.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)*

(No. 790.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 25, 1909*

M. PASSEK, Russian consul-general at Bushire, and M. Kadobovsky, late acting consul-general at Bushire, were attacked on their way from Shiraz to Bushire two stages out from Shiraz, near Dastarjin, by Bezanadis, a branch of the Kuhgelui tribes. Several members of the escort were wounded, and one Russian Cossack was killed. M. Passek and his party have retreated on Khan-i-Zinian.

The telegraph doctor, Woolhatt, accompanied by His Majesty's consul at Shiraz, with an escort of Indian sowars and Persians, have gone to their assistance. I have approved Mr. Hill's action in accompanying Dr. Woolhatt, as it would be unsafe for the doctor to proceed thither escorted only by Persians.

[43183]

No. 179.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)*

(No. 791.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 25, 1909.*

IN continuation of my telegram No. 790 of the 25th November.  
M. Pokrowski informs me that several caravans, doubtless for the sake of protection, had joined M. Passek's party.

They were ambushed by 250 tribesmen yesterday morning. Casualties included some twelve Persians attached to the caravans, among whom was a local official commanding the caravan guards, in addition to those reported in my immediately preceding telegram. Fighting lasted half-an-hour. The tribesmen robbed the caravans, but cyphers and consular archives were saved from them.

[43242]

No. 180.

*Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received November 26.)*

*Baltic House, Leadenhall Street, London,  
November 24, 1909.*

Dear Sir,  
THE following telegrams exchanged between my firm and Mr. David Brown, who is acting as my agent at Tehran in regard to Ormuz Island, may be of interest to you:—

Received from Mr. Brown, November 24, 1909:

"Consider present moment favourable; have reopened negotiations."

Sent to Mr. Brown, November 24, 1909:

"Maintain our offer 24th August, provided all oxide now mined Ormuz belongs to us."

The offer of 24th August was contained in a telegram to Mr. Brown, which read as follows:—

"At figures mentioned—that is, 40,000l. cash and 2,000l. per annum royalty sixty years—do your utmost include minerals salt, Persian littoral, of course without interference Anglo-Persian Oil Company (Limited) concessions. Failing this, do your utmost secure mainland concessions now held by Moyn, which understand include Minab, Namakdani, Khamir, Kong, Mamasani. If impossible close upon terms of your telegram, of course understand all mined minerals and salt on concessions obtained for us belong to us immediately, including about 2,000 tons of Ormuz oxide, for which Ellinger and Co., Manchester, and (or) Weir sending 'Edenhall' Ormuz in the course of the next few days from Bussorah, and which if concession obtained we naturally deliver on account Weir contract if it exists. We are prepared open a credit in favour of Imperial Bank of Persia."

Yours, &c.  
FRANK C. STRICK AND CO.

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No. 181.

*The Imperial Bank of Persia to Foreign Office.—(Received November 26.)*

Sir,  
I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, and beg to thank you for the information given. My directors will be greatly obliged if you will be so good as to inform them when a decision is arrived at in the matter. Thanking you in advance, I have, &c.

G. NEWELL, Manager.

[43398]

No. 182.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received November 27.)*

Dear Sir,  
28, Oxford Street, Manchester, November 26, 1909.  
WE beg to inform you that we purpose shipping on behalf of Messrs. Andrew Weir and Co., from the Island of Hormuz about 500 tons red oxide of iron by the steamship "Haddon Hall," belonging to the West Hartlepool Steam Navigation Company, loading to commence about the 30th instant, and we shall be obliged if you will, as previously arranged, take the necessary steps to advise His Majesty's Minister at Tehran of this loading.

[1681]

Referring to our letter of the 16th November, in reply to your letter 40161/09, we find that we could wire the advice to Tehran from here at a cost of about 30k., and therefore, if the expense to your Office will be much more than this figure, perhaps you will be good enough to allow us to cable His Majesty's Minister direct. In this case we shall be obliged if you will kindly let us know at once, so that we may wire Tehran in time for His Majesty's Minister to take any steps which he may find to be necessary before the 30th instant.

We are, &c.  
ELLINGER AND CO.

[43441]

No. 183.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 27.)*

(No. 792.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 27, 1909.

PLEASE refer to my telegram No. 595 of the 18th July.  
I am informed by the Persian Government that the appointment of Azad-ul-Mulk as Regent has been confirmed by the Medjliss.

[42634]

No. 184.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 307.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 27, 1909.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 604 of the 12th instant, reporting a conversation with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting recent events at Ardebil.

On the 22nd instant I told the Russian chargé d'affaires, who enquired whether I had any news from Persia, that everything appeared to have gone well at Ardebil, and that all trouble there seemed to be over. I hoped therefore that the withdrawal of troops from Kaxvin, which had been suspended solely because of the trouble at Ardebil, might now be proceeded with.

I am, &c.  
E. GREY.

[43446]

No. 185.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 28.)*

(No. 498.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, November 28, 1909.

M. ISVOLSKY spoke to me yesterday, in the course of an interview, on the subject of the regrettable incident in Southern Persia, i.e., the recent attack on the Russian consul. His Excellency observed that the acting Russian consul had been on a previous occasion attacked by the same tribesmen and that no reparation had been made. The punishment of the delinquents and the payment of compensation would, however, be insisted on by the Russian Government this time, and representations would be made to the Persian Government. He added that the evacuation by Russian troops was delayed by such incidents. I pointed out to M. Isvolsky that the question of our establishing road guards was proved by this incident to be both necessary and urgent, but no written reply from him on this subject has reached me yet. I was given no indication as to what steps the Russian Government propose to take in the event of the Persian Government proving incapable of inflicting the necessary punishment on the tribesmen concerned in this attack.

[43444]

No. 186.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 28.)*

(No. 793.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, November 28, 1909.

EASTERN Azerbaijan.

I am informed by His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez that Shahsevan have gone into winter quarters at Moghan and that Rahim Khan has retired to Karadagh. In addition to keeping open roads from Ardchil to Astara and Thabreez with Russian troops, it is proposed to place Russian garrisons at Ahaz, Messhepar, and Moghan.

With reference to Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 496, no information has reached me to the effect that Persian troops had defeated rebels, who dispersed as the result, Mr. Smart informs me, of negotiations with the Russian troops.

[43584]

No. 187.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)*

(No. 625.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, November 26, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report that the attack by Persian brigands on M. Passek, Russian consul-general at Bushire, on his journey from Shiraz forms the subject of a leading article in the "Novoe Vremya" of to-day.

The journal observes that this incident confirms, in an unpleasantly realistic manner, the comments made in its columns a day or two ago as to the extremely serious statement made in the Shah's Speech from the Throne to the effect that the Persian population were filled with grief and alarm at the presence of foreign troops on Persian territory. As a matter of fact order is guaranteed and safety of life ensured only in those places where there are a sufficient number of Russian soldiers. The troops of the Governor-General of Azerbaijan who were dispatched against Rahim Khan are returning to Tabreez after having remained a whole month at Serah doing nothing. The notorious Sattar Khan has fled from Ardebil, leaving the inhabitants to their fate. Persian and Russian merchants put all their hopes in the Russian troops at Ardebil and Tabreez for keeping the trade routes open. Such, then, is the sorrow of the Persian people over the "foreign invasion." Six trading caravans, belonging to those very Persians who (in the words of the Speech from the Throne) are so grievously dismayed by the presence of Russian troops in Persian territory, had attacked themselves to the weakly guarded Russian transport column. After giving the details of the attack as reported by the telegraphic agency, the "Novoe Vremya" continues: "Such is the order existing in Persia—in one of the quietest districts of Persia. Bands of robbers numbering hundreds of persons muster there and give regular battle to travellers without let or hindrance. Where, then, are the Persian authorities? The 'serious representations' made by the Russian Minister at Tehran will evoke an equally serious reply from the Persian Government, which has just shown in the Speech from the Throne how thoroughly it understands the gravity of the situation. But the most serious of diplomatic documents will not frighten brigands; swords and bullets must be employed in dealing with them, not pourparlers. And this is the very respect in which the Persian Government is incompetent. The force they sent to Ardebil achieved nothing in the course of a month except to frighten the peaceful inhabitants. Sattar Khan, the most famous of Persian military leaders, has proved his ability by a hurried flight from the place of danger. What, then, is the use of the 'most serious' representations made by M. Poklewski? Are they not rather likely to prove a laughing-stock? The Persian Government knows how to compose a Speech from the Throne, but is absolutely incapable of preserving general order or even of safeguarding foreign diplomatic representatives. In these circumstances, if the Russian Minister feels that he is indeed the representative of a Great Power and not merely a diplomatic clerk, he should take other steps on his own responsibility. Shiraz is situated within the sphere of English influence, and there is an English gunboat always stationed at Bushire. The Persian Government with the best will in the world is powerless to satisfy the demand for the punishment of the offenders. There remains but one natural resource to ask for the co-operation and assistance of English diplomacy, which has already once taken measures by armed action to restore order and safety in South-West Persia. This would compel the

Persian Government to awake from its slumbers far more effectively than energetic representations at Tehran. The telegrams of yesterday evening report that the English consul left for the scene of the affair with an escort of British Indian soldiers immediately on learning the news. This shows that the Englishman did not waste time in fruitless diplomatic correspondence but proceeded to action at once. It is this which constitutes the enviable difference between English and Russian diplomats."

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[43527]

No. 188.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.-(Received November 29.)*

(No. 206.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 8, 1909.

I HAVE conferred with Major Cox regarding the question of railways in Persia, and I have the honour to report that we are in agreement with the Foreign Office memorandum of the 29th September, 1908, as to the disastrous effect on British trade in Persia of a railway from Mohammerah to Julfa on the lines desired by the Russian Government, but incidentally we should wish to record our opinion that construction of the railway from north to south, as distinguished from the simultaneous construction from both north and south, would, as enabling Russian trade gradually to exclude our own from districts where it now holds its own, be as objectionable as the imposition of differential rates in the Russian sphere, and should be as emphatically rejected as the latter. Were the work of construction to commence from the Gulf end under our auspices, or even from Julfa and Mohammerah simultaneously, and were differential rates excluded, it would, of course, greatly benefit our trade, as it would enable British goods to compete favourably with Russian right up to the capital, but until Russia can be persuaded to satisfy us on these points it would be better that the project should remain in abeyance.

At the same time, we think that the ear-marking of a concession for this and other railways of special interest to us should no longer be delayed, and that we should, in anticipation of the expiry of the railway embargo a year hence, lose no time in making the communication to the Persian Government foreshadowed in the memorandum handed to M. Isvolsky on the 14th October, 1908. I find Major Cox in agreement with this memorandum as to the concessions of special importance to British interests, except that he points out the need for joining up Bushire via Ahbab with the Bunder Abbas-Shiraz line. Incidentally, I may mention in regard to the railways specifically referred to in the Russian and British memoranda as most closely concerning the two Powers, that I gather from conversation with M. Poklewsky that the reason for the conspicuous omission from the Russian memorandum of a branch linking Khanikin with the main line was that the memorandum dealt with lines which Russia wished to construct, and not with those whose construction by a third party she wished to block, which was the case with the branch in question, the construction of which would be, at any rate for a long time to come, particularly unwelcome to her.

What will be the attitude of the Medjlis towards foreign enterprise in general it will be difficult to foresee, but the feeling against Russia is now so strong that I fear that to obtain an engagement from the Persian Government securing to the two Powers preferential rights in regard to railway development in Persia will require very great pressure.

When in the Russian memorandum of the 15th August, 1908, it was suggested that the proposed Julfa-Mohammerah concession should be applied for in connection with a loan, His Majesty's Government thought it better that the two questions should not be linked. Possibly His Majesty's Government might see no objection to such a course if what is contemplated for the present is not a specific concession, but a general ear-marking for the two Powers of railway enterprise in Persia, and in this case I would suggest that the two Powers should make the engagement we seek a condition of any advance from the two Governments; but in any case, whether we succeed in securing such an engagement or not, the fact of our having made the communication indicated should go far to block concessions to any third party.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

[43528]

No. 189.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.-(Received November 29.)*

(No. 207.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 9, 1909.

IN my despatch No. 147 of the 27th July I reported that the Sheikh of Mohammerah was not completely satisfied with the assurances given him for himself and "his heirs and successors," and that he was anxious that the words in inverted commas should be changed to "his own successive male descendants up to a period of one hundred years."

I have taken advantage of Major Cox's visit to Tehran to confer with him on the question of our assurances to the sheikh, and he has embodied the sheikh's wishes in this matter in the accompanying memorandum (Inclosure 1).

I trust that the explanations given by Major Cox of the reasons which have impelled the sheikh to ask for the extension of our assurances to his offspring will be considered sufficient to warrant our giving him satisfaction on this point.

It will be noticed that the sheikh also desires an assurance of our protection for his private property. I take it that, in the event of any encroachment on his property in Persia, we should in fact find it desirable to give him the necessary assistance for a satisfactory solution, so that assurances on this head—provided they were expressly confined to his property in Persia, for we do not, of course, wish to do anything which might encourage him to acquire more property in Turkey—would not increase our practical obligations. I would therefore recommend that an assurance should also be given him on this point, and, in order to give us what would be recognised as some *locus standi* for helping the sheikh in the event of the Persian Government's interfering with his property, I venture to hope that it may be found possible to give effect to Major Cox's suggestion that a decoration be conferred upon him. A favourable moment might be after the recent agreement with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company is disclosed, provided that its disclosure does not arouse any great agitation in the Medjlis, in which latter event the bestowal of the decoration might be postponed for a while.

It will be observed from Major Cox's memorandum that the sheikh wishes to be given a document which could be shown to his tribesmen, setting forth in brief the assurances we have given him at various times, and that at a recent interview he dictated to Major Cox the form which he would like it to take. I venture to think that His Majesty's Government might see their way to giving him this document in a somewhat modified form. Worded as it stands at present it is open to the interpretation that we have accepted the sheikh as a British protected person. It is also open to the objection that it contains nothing to show that our undertaking is dependent on the good behaviour of the sheikh and his offspring. These points are covered in the amended formula marked "Inclosure 2" which I beg to recommend. It would probably satisfy the sheikh, and it seems to Major Cox and to me to commit us to no more than we should, even if it did not exist, find ourselves compelled in our own interests to perform. The proposed formula covers the points already referred to in this despatch, i.e., the extension of our assurances to the sheikh's male descendants for a stated period and protection for his property in Persia, but does not include two further assurances which the sheikh desires to obtain, viz., those which relate to his treatment in the event of Great Britain's seizing the southern customs or intervening in the south. Major Cox and I have discussed these two points, and he thinks that it would be possible if the sheikh reverts to the question to make him understand that His Majesty's Government cannot give undertakings contingent on action of their own which they cannot regard as at all probable, and to satisfy him on the points in question with general friendly verbal assurances. On this point if His Majesty's Government have any special instructions they might be given to Major Cox before his return to his post.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 189.

*Memorandum by Major Cox on Assurances desired by the Sheikh of Mohammerah.*

BEFORE I left the Gulf for England Sheikh Khazal begged me to lay his circumstances and aspirations before His Majesty's Minister and Government, and after my

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arrival in England he sent me a telegram which was intended to remind me on the subject.

We have, of course, given the sheikh a generous amount of sympathetic support of late, and have considerably strengthened the assurances previously given to him. He is still, however, nervous for the future on certain points, and anxious for further signs, and I am inclined to think that when the nature of his apprehensions, and the facts at the back of them are examined, His Majesty's Government may find it possible to satisfy him without any practical increase in the weight of the obligations which they have already accepted in regard to him.

In spite of what we have hitherto given him in the way of assurances—

1. He is always in fear that his nephew Hanzal, a man of about 40, whose loyalty is doubtful, and who was recently suspected and accused of being implicated in a plot against his (Sheikh Khazal's) life, may seize some favourable opportunity to affect his own or his son's assassination and usurp the sheikhdom.

It is to provide against this or a similar contingency, and in order that Hanzal may know that it is useless his aspiring to the succession that the sheikh asks that the words "heirs and successors" be appended to "male descendants," &c. (vide any letter of the 16th May 1909.) Sheikh Khazal quite realises that we could only support a descendant so long as the said descendant continued to act up to his obligations to us generally, and was acceptable to his tribesmen; and, as regards the latter, he says he would be prepared, if we wish it, to obtain the signification of the assent of the elders to the succession of his children.

If the assurances were worded somewhat as follows: "Male descendants provided that they continued to satisfy their obligations to His Majesty's Government and are acceptable to their tribesmen;" it would please Sheikh Khazal greatly, and I do not see that by doing so we should in practice be further committed to any serious extent than we are now.

It is obvious, and this the sheikh well understands, that if he or one of his descendants proved an unsatisfactory ruler, or failed to act up to his obligations to us, he would be considered to have forfeited the right to our support.

2. Sheikh Khazal still fears that some day, either as a complement to Russian action in the north or as a result of the existence of continued chaos in the country, we may be obliged to intervene in Southern Persia and perhaps find it convenient to take over Mohammerrah.

From this apprehension results his desire that our assurances should be recorded as holding good for a specific period.

Here again it seems to me that it would be possible to find a form of words which would satisfy him without inconveniently committing us, e.g., would "male descendants to the third generation, provided that," &c., be out of the question? It is always our policy with these Arab rulers, e.g., Bahrain, Kuwait, tribal chiefs, to guide them and control their external relations but leave them independent in regard to their internal policies.

3. Apart from his position as Sheikh of Mohammerrah and district and the property which he enjoys as such, Sheikh Khazal is apprehensive for the future safety of his person and of the property and income which he possesses and enjoys as a private individual.

In this position he may be compared to the Zil-es-Sultan, to whom on certain conditions and in view of certain facts we have given a great deal of help in the direction of safeguarding his person and private property.

One of the grounds on which we do so (or did so) is because the Zil enjoys a British decoration, and I think that the bestowal of a British decoration would be a convenient way of showing support to the Sheikh of Mohammerrah. It would certainly please the Sheikh. The Sultan of Muscat has a G.C.I.E. May I suggest a K.C.I.E. for Mohammerrah?

4. Sheikh Khazal thinks it possible that we may be driven to assume control of the customs of the south, including his.

In that contingency, however, he hopes that we will leave him in immediate control of the Mohammerrah and Ahwas customs, as at present, by farming them to him at a figure based on the average receipts for a past term of years, subject to periodical revision. Can we meet his wishes in this direction?

5. Having regard to the possibility which he apprehends of the break up of Persia and of our intervention in the south, he would be relieved by an assurance that we would maintain him and his tribesmen in the enjoyment of their present rights and

territory and internal autonomy as we do now in the case of Bahrein, Kuwait, &c., and that in case it should be found possible to preserve that state of things, we would undertake to give him the personal revenue he now enjoys and give him an asylum in India or elsewhere.

6. Quite apart from the desired assurances set forth in the foregoing paragraph, the sheikh explains that the résumé of the various assurances given him from time to time up to now, which I recorded at his request in my letter to him dated the 16th May, 1909, is in that form suitable for his own information; but that owing to the references made in it to previous documents and previous occasions and the length of this letter, it is not a document which he could conveniently show to, or would be comprehended by, his tribal elders.

On the other hand, he considers it of urgent importance that he should, in order to quiet any apprehensions on the part of his tribesmen, and also to strengthen their support of himself and their faith in the friendly policy of the British Government, have some brief form of written assurance in general terms which he can show to them.

Asked to state offhand what sort of form and terms such an assurance as he had in mind should, in his opinion, take, he dictated the words of which I attach a literal translation.

It seems to me that, with slight modifications, it could be put into a form which His Majesty's Government might be able to approve and which would suffice for the sheikh's purpose.

P. Z. C.

*Translation of Brief Form of Assurances of the nature desired by Sheikh Khazal, and in the terms dictated by him to Major Cox.*

(For communication to tribal elders.)

I am authorized to inform you that whatsoever change may take place in the state of the government of Persia, and whether it be Royalist or Nationalist, the British Government will be prepared to afford you support and protection for preventing any sort of encroachment on your property, jurisdiction, and rights; and will likewise protect you against foreign Powers, and not allow any encroachment to be made on your property, jurisdiction, and rights. These assurances have been given for yourself and afterwards for your male descendants by the British Government.

Inclosure 2 in No. 150.

*Revised Version of Assurance to Sheikh of Mohammerrah.*

I AM authorised to inform you that, no matter what change may take place in the form of the government of Persia, and whether it be Royalist or Nationalist, the British Government will be prepared to afford you the support necessary for obtaining a satisfactory solution in the event of any encroachment by the Persian Government on your jurisdiction and recognised rights or on your property in Persia.

In like manner they will afford you protection against molestation from foreign Powers, and will not permit any encroachment to be made by them on your said jurisdiction and recognised rights or upon your property in Persia.

These assurances are given for yourself by the British Government, and are intended to extend to your male descendants so long as you or they shall not have failed to observe your obligations to the Central Government and shall have continued to be guided by our advice and maintain an attitude satisfactory to us.

[43492]

No. 150.

*Mr. Murling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)*

(No. 930.)

Sir,

Constantinople, November 22, 1909.  
With reference to my telegram No. 357 of to-day's date, I have the honour to report that on receipt of your telegrams Nos. 655, 656, 657, and 691 of the 29th October and the 3rd November respectively, I caused enquiries to be made as to

the extent of English interests in the Société du Tombac, with a view to bringing influence to bear on that company in the sense desired by Sir G. Barclay. The result of these enquiries showed that the whole of the shares in the Société du Tombac are held by the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and the board of management is composed entirely of officials of the bank, and that as the enterprise holds out no prospect of becoming a paying concern, the sole interest of the bank is to try to liquidate it without loss before the expiration of the concession in 1917. There is one Englishman on the board, Mr. Charmand, but when approached on the subject of the renewal of the contract with the Russian shipping company or alternatively of the appointment of Messrs. Strick as agents, he said he could not interfere in the matter. The whole business of the company is conducted by M. Dominic Panjiri, who, when sounded on the subject, said that the question was purely a business one, and that he would be obliged to accept the most advantageous offer by whomsoever made.

The Russian Ambassador, to whom I communicated the result of my enquiries, agrees with me that in the circumstances it is difficult to bring any effective pressure to bear on the Société du Tombac, but he hopes that he will be able to obtain a promise from the Imperial Ottoman Bank that if Messrs. Wünnchhaus are unable to offer more advantageous terms than those of the existing contract with the Russian company, the contract with the latter will be renewed. But he could not, he said, do more than this.

Should he fail, I doubt whether any local action by His Majesty's embassy to obtain the agency for Messrs. Strick would have any better chance of success, but I would venture to suggest that possibly a recommendation to the London board of the Imperial Ottoman Bank would carry considerably more weight, especially if it were made in the shape of support to an application made direct to the bank by Messrs. Strick.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

43512

No. 191.

Sir A. Johnstone to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 152.)  
Sir,

Copenhagen, November 21, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to enclose translation from the "Dannebrog" of to-day of an official announcement of the Royal Danish Geographical Society respecting proposed expedition in 1910 to the lands bordering on the Persian Gulf, as well as of an interview between the Secretary of the Society and a correspondent of the newspaper.

Admiral Richelien is said to be at the head of the committee organising the expedition, and Herr von Glückstadt is one of the members of it.

Both these gentlemen are well known in Denmark for their connection with banking and commercial business here, and especially for their interests in Danish industrial enterprises in Siam.

I should be grateful if instructions could be sent me whether or not I am to mention this matter to Herr Seavenims, and request an explanation of the exact scope of the proposed expedition.

As you are probably aware there is a small arms establishment in Denmark where the Danish rifle mitrailleur: Rekyl Gevær 303" is manufactured. I believe that full details as to this rifle have been furnished to the War Office by Lieutenant-Colonel Yarde-Buller, Military Attaché to His Majesty's legation.

I have, &c.

ALAN JOHNSTONE.

P.S. (Confidential).—Herr Olufsen, the Secretary of the Geographical Society, made in 1896 and 1898 journeys into the interior of Central Asia, and his proceedings were reported to the Foreign Office by Sir C. Scott, the late Sir E. Fane, and by myself (last despatch on the subject, Sir E. Fane's No. 72 of the 25th September, 1898). He was then warned against approaching too closely to Afghanistan, and did not attempt to do so.

Special facilities for the purpose of scientific research in India were, at the request of M. de Bille, granted in 1907 by His Majesty's Government to certain Herr Benedictsen (see Foreign Office despatch No. 43, Confidential, of the 3rd June, 1908). But the

Government of India came to the conclusion that Benedictsen in reality belonged to the Russian Intelligence Department, and the facilities were withdrawn.

With respect to the question of arms exported from Denmark, I may mention that the Russian Minister here told me some time ago that during the height of the Finnish revolutionary movement in the years 1907-08, the Russian Government employed a secret service agent in Denmark, who discovered that extensive shipments of arms and ammunition were being forwarded to Finland in Danish bottoms, although the arms and ammunition themselves were manufactured in other countries, and that he was able through this agent to warn his Government in time to prevent their being landed.

I do not suggest that the Danish shipping and commercial firms will endeavour to smuggle arms into Persia, but I only remark that they are capable of doing so.

Prince Koudacheff himself, when I mentioned the subject of this proposed geographical expedition, said he knew nothing about it.

A. J.

Enclosure in No. 191.

Extract from the "Dannebrog" of November 21, 1909.

A DANISH EXPEDITION TO THE COUNTRIES ROUND THE PERSIAN GULF.—A SHORT INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR OLUFSEN.

(Translation.)

THE Geographical Society issued the following statement yesterday evening:—

"The Committee of the Royal Geographical Society have taken the initiative in a plan for sending an expedition to the countries around the Persian Gulf.

"The object of the expedition is to examine the ethnographical, topographical, botanical and ethnological conditions obtaining in the districts in question, and also at the same time to collect information as to conditions which may have practical importance.

"A scientific exploration of these districts is an excellent piece of work for our Geographical Society. Without going into details we can say that only few parts of the globe are so rich in material which calls for examination from a scientific point of view.

"To what extent this exploration will prove capable of execution depends upon the support accorded to the enterprise by the institutions and private persons to whom application has been made.

"It is to be hoped that this excellent undertaking, which may redound to the honour and advantage of our country, will meet with the necessary support."

Immediately on receipt of the above statement we paid a visit to the secretary of the Geographical Society, Professor Olufsen, and begged him to give us a few more details of the new expedition and its object. But the Professor's lips were sealed with seven seals.

"All that I can tell you is that a Committee has been formed at the request of the Geographical Society to make preparations for the expedition."

"Can you not tell us something about the Committee?"

"I really don't know," replied the Professor.

"Who is the chairman?"

"Well, yes," the Professor yields whilst still on the defensive: "the chairman is Admiral Richelien."

"And the others?"

"Professor Frants Buhl, Major-General Rasmussen, Consul V. Glückstadt, Herr M. L. Frimolt (a large merchant) and Professor Olufsen. Now are you satisfied?"

"No, far from it."

"Well, you are not going to be told anything more," said the Professor, severely.

"When is the expedition to leave?"

"In the course of 1910, as soon as we have collected sufficient money. An expedition of this kind can [sic] be ready to start in the course of a couple of days."

"Is the State to be asked to contribute?"

"No. We are only applying to various funds and private persons."

[1884]



"In the statement there is something about 'practical exploration,' does that by any chance mean investigations of a commercially practical nature?"

"General practical geographical exploration is meant, also with reference to commerce; it is very likely that a commercial expert may be associated as a member of the expedition. But for that matter there is work enough in all directions round the Persian Gulf."

"Yes, and now we come to the heart of the whole matter, Professor. Where is the expedition to begin, and who is to lead it?"

Professor Ohlisen smiled knowingly, and replied in the famous words of Sir E. Shackleton: "You must be early if you want to catch me. Wouldn't you just like to know?"

[43619]

No. 192.

*Consul Stevens to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)*

(No. 21.)

Sir,

*Batoum, November 6, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to report, from information furnished by the Caucasian newspapers, that the Russian military force which has recently been ordered to proceed to protect the Russian vice-consulate and Russian residents at Ardabil is composed of a section of a grenadier battery of artillery, one battalion of the Salian Infantry Regiment, and three sotnias of either the Laba or Uman Cossack Regiments. One sotnia of Uman Cossacks has already arrived at Ardabil.

I have, &amp;c.

P. STEVENS.

[43677]

No. 193.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 29.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India dated the 11th November, relative to a conversation between Sheikh Mubarek and the political agent at Koweit.

*India Office, November 27, 1909.*

Inclosure 1 in No. 193.

*Major Trevor to Government of India.*

(Confidential.)

*Bushire, October 14, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of a letter concerning a conversation which the Sheikh of Koweit held with the political agent.

2. Sheikh Mubarek appears to be in a very friendly mood at present, as instanced by his spontaneous offer of the agency rent-free, and by this conversation; but I think there must be some ulterior motive in all this affability.

Inclosure 2 in No. 193.

*Captain Shakespear to Major Trevor.*

(Confidential.)

*Koweit, October 11, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to report the substance of a conversation which the Sheikh of Mubarek held with me a few days ago on the affairs of the Sheikh of Mohammurah, in case it may prove of interest to Government.

2. It appears that shortly after Major Cox's last visit to Mohammurah, Sheikh Khazal called together the headmen of his tribes and discussed with them the advantages of definitely binding himself to the British Government by a document,

which, evidently from Sheikh Mubarek's description, was intended to be a regular treaty on more or less equal terms. The headmen of the tribes were very averse to any such proposal, pointing out that, though they might make a treaty and so avoid Persian and Turkish interference in their affairs, they would be subject to endless interference from the British, who would, little by little, reduce them and their sheikh (Khazal) to the condition of Bahrain, where now nothing was possible without the "order" of the political agent; they could see no compensating advantage in such an arrangement, especially as at present they found that a combination of all the near Arab tribes could make things so unpleasant for either Persian or Turks, that Mohammurah generally succeeded in securing its own way very satisfactorily. Sheikh Khazal was, however, insistent, and pointed out that, though such had been the case of Bahrain, it had been brought about from within by the Khalifa family's own foolish method of working, and contrasted our treatment of Bahrain with that of Koweit, where a political agent had proved of considerable help to Sheikh Mubarek. Finally, it appears that by argument, specious promises, and lavish hospitality, Sheikh Khazal prevailed on his Chah's headmen to agree that, if he put his signature to any document of the kind contemplated, they would follow his lead and also append their signatures. In reply to my query as to why Sheikh Khazal should be so anxious to secure the signature of the headmen to such a document as well as his own, Sheikh Mubarek pointed out that that was the only certain way by which Sheikh Khazal could bind all the various subtribes to their promise, fearing as he did, if anything subsequently occurred to which one of the tribes objected, that he might be unable to prevent all of them siding with the disappointed one and leaving him without the necessary support either to force compliance or induce it peacefully.

3. The above was conveyed to me by Sheikh Mubarek quite spontaneously, and at the moment struck me as being specially produced for British consumption or as a *batton d'essai*. Then, on his own account, Sheikh Mubarek urged the advantages to the British Government in some such tie, pointing out that between them he and Sheikh Khazal owned practically the whole of the cultivated land on the Shatt-el-Arab up to Mohammurah and beyond.

4. I have no doubt, from the careful way in which the sheikh expressed himself, that this communication and probably the form of it were carefully arranged between himself and Sheikh Khazal at one of their frequent meetings at Failya, solely with an eye to their own advantage; each desires to rid himself of what authority the Turkish or Persian Government may have over him and to replace it by the benevolent protection of the British Government. Though the sheikhs may talk of the benefits of such protection, their sole idea is that when obtained it will give them a guarantee from foreign aggression, while leaving them absolute within their own territories to do what they please with life and property within their respective jurisdictions.

5. I have reported the conversation, not so much as likely to lead to anything further, but to show how these two sheikhs regard matters in this region. For it must be remembered, though this of course is never even hinted, exactly the same means which the two sheikhs employ to achieve their ends with their present suzerains could be used with equal effect against ourselves, and I regret to have to state that, in my opinion, I do not think Sheikh Mubarek would have the slightest hesitation in concerting any such move if he thought he had the least chance of obtaining a successful issue.

[43794]

No. 194.

*Mr. Rogers to Mr. Newell.—(Communicated by Sir T. Jackson November 29.)*

(Confidential.)

Dear Mr. Newell,

*Tehran, November 10, 1909.*

I CONFIRM my letter of the 6th instant, and have to acknowledge yours of the 28th October, the contents of which are noted.

*Daudful Accounts. Etemadieh v. Kawan-ed-Dowleh.*—This case has been proceeding in the Persian Foreign Office court up to a day or two ago, and has now been suspended indefinitely. Sir George Barclay expressed to me his regrets at being unable to support the bank further in the matter for the present, in view of the fact that the Persian Government had notified the British Legation they would not recognise the transfer of my debt owing by one Persian subject to another if made over to a foreign subject, in which category the Etemadieh Company's claim on the Kawan-ed-Dowleh should be placed.

I have asked the vice-consul to let me have an extract of the Persian Government's note to which he refers in his letter, of which I send you a copy. I believe this was in the form of a circular note to all the foreign legations. Sir George is of opinion that the Persian Government has good grounds for their objection, as preferential treatment is obtainable for such claims in the Persian Foreign Office court when put forward by a foreign subject. However, in talking over the matter over, he expressed himself prepared to take such steps as the British Foreign Office may instruct, and in this connection I think it would be as well for us to know exactly to what extent we may look for further assistance from the British Government to enable us to realise this—the only asset possessed by the company. The legation are of opinion that the transfer of an unimproved debt to a third party cannot be good in law. Would it not be worth while to obtain a legal opinion on the subject? In this case there are two alternatives: one to allow the Ettemadieh Company's case against the Kawam-ed-Dowleh to be proved in the Persian courts—an interminable affair—and later come upon our debtor through the Persian Foreign Office if he should be fortunate to obtain a verdict against such a powerful man as the Kawam-ed-Dowleh, or to make the Ettemadieh bankrupt, and in that case the creditors would have to take up the case and divide the spoils if successful; but I think in this latter event we should get little or nothing.

*Ant.*—I have been unable to secure even a small contract for 50,000*l*; the Minister of Finance absolutely declines to take the responsibility before the Medjliss meets, having been already attacked in the present provisional council for allowing the existing contracts to be taken over by the present administration. We can form some idea of the reception that proposals for new contracts will receive at the hands of the inexperienced nomenclature that form the coming Parliament, and we stand a poor chance of obtaining a mint contract unless the required pressure is brought to bear by the legation.

*Persian Government.*—I enclose copy of our letter to the Minister of Finance on the subject of the advance against jewels. I gave the British Minister the substance of your telegram and he expressed himself quite in accord with your views. We are accused of an obstructive and unsympathetic attitude by the partisans of the new régime, and the Minister of Finance told me that our refusal to assist the Government at the present juncture would cause an unpleasant impression in the minds of the Medjliss when it meets.

Since writing the above, I have been to see the Minister of Finance, who displayed great anxiety to arrange the advance against jewels. To keep you *au courant* with all the moves towards the end desired by the Persian Government, I confirm the telegram sent to you to-day as per copy enclosed. I have also fully informed the British Minister of the situation, and I believe he is telegraphing the Foreign Office also. I learned from him that the resources of the Government are now reduced to not more than 20,000*l*. With the prospect of a struggle at Ardabil necessitating the dispatch of troops, their plight is a sore one. The verbal assurances given by the Minister of Finance were to a great extent confirmed by the other Ministers I met at the legation last evening, particularly in regard to the ability of the Bushire customs receipts to expand sufficiently to keep up the 30,000 tomans per mensem and bring up existing arrears, based on assurances given them by M. Morinard.

Yours faithfully,  
SYDNEY ROGERS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 194.

*Mr. Cowan to Imperial Bank of Persia.*

Sir,

WITH reference to the claim of the Imperial Bank of Persia against Ettemadieh Company, I am directed by His Majesty's Minister to inform you that the Foreign Office Tribunal has decided that the case between Ettemadieh Company and Kawam-ed-Dowleh must be settled by the Persian courts. This decision appears to be correctly based upon the Persian law which prohibits the transfer of a debt by a Persian to a foreign subject.

I am, &c.  
N. PATRICK COWAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 194.

*Imperial Bank of Persia to Minister of Finance, Tehran.*

Your Excellency,

November 8, 1909.

WE have the honor to inform you that in reply to our telegram regarding the question of an advance of 500,000 tomans to your Government, we have been requested by our board of directors to state the manner in which interest on the existing debts is at present being met; and further to inform them of the arrangements made for a refund of the silver, the property of the bank, withdrawn in coin from the Government mint and misappropriated by your Government.

In reply to the first question, we informed our board of directors that the interest paid during the period 20th March to 6th November left a deficit of 1,368,973 kranas, and to the second question we replied that your Government had, up to the present moment, allowed the matter of the misappropriation of the silver to remain without a settlement.

We feel assured that your Excellency will recognise the importance of arriving at a speedy settlement of these questions, and thus permitting our board to favourably consider a further advance in view of their earnest desire to assist your Government.

We are, &c.  
For the Imperial Bank of Persia,  
SYDNEY ROGERS,  
Deputy Manager.

Inclosure 3 in No. 194.

*Conditions of Imperial Bank of Persia for the proposed Joint Advance to Persian Government.*

ARRANGEMENT regarding monthly instalments of interest amounting to 300,000 kranas per month on existing debts to be confirmed by the present Government, and an additional pledge of the Mohammedan customs receipts to be made to the bank, to ensure loyal and prompt carrying out of promises given by the Minister of Finance that all arrears of interest accrued since March last be gradually paid off, and that these measures take effect from the beginning of February 1910.

2. Settlement of misappropriation of 30,000*l* silver from the mint, and interest thereon.

In default of deduction of the equivalent of this amount from the sum now proposed to be advanced, the following modification would probably be approved by the board:—

The immediate refund of 500,000 kranas, said to have remained at the mint at its closing on the 13th July last, and to be still awaiting disposal; the balance of, say, 1,000,000 kranas, to be formally taken over as a Government debt, and to be repaid by a first charge of 15,000 kranas per diem from the profits of the mint, as silver is coined for contractors.

3. Repayment of the advance forming the subject of the present negotiations to be made from the proceeds of the proposed unified Persian Government loan consolidating all Government debts contracted to foreigners, for which—according to an unofficial statement by the Persian Minister of Finance—it is the intention of the Persian Government to negotiate in the near future.

4. Ratification of the verbal promise made by the Persian Minister of Finance to grant the Imperial Bank of Persia a mint contract in the event of the successful issue of the present negotiations.

Inclosure 4 in No. 194.

*Mr. Rogers to Mr. Newell.*

(Confidential.)  
(Extract.)

Tehran, November 13, 1909.

YOUR telegram accepting the proposals for the advance to the Persian Government came yesterday. On Thursday I was told by Sir George Barclay it had been [1684] 2 M

decided that the Russian Government and ourselves should make the advance jointly under certain conditions. A conference was held at the Russian Legation yesterday, at which the two Ministers were present and the Banque d'Escompte manager and myself. It was there agreed upon that the two banks should write an identical letter setting forth the respective conditions under which the loan was to be made, and failing to obtain the Persian Government's acceptance of the conditions laid down by either party the negotiations would fall through. I understand that the concessions demanded by the Russian Government are political for the most part; these, however, were not disclosed at the meeting yesterday, while our cards were laid on the table and declared no more than we should receive by right and that had already been verbally promised to us by the Minister of Finance, and which are vital to our interests. . . .

I confirm my private telegram of to-day placing before you a small loan offered upon the security of the mint profits. I had no hesitation in recommending this for your favourable consideration, as it would provide us with a mint contract, and secure the advance at the same time, as, in my opinion, the present negotiations are doomed to failure, unless modifications are made in the demands of the Russian Government.

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Inclosure 5 in No. 194.

*Imperial Bank of Persia, Tehran, to Imperial Bank of Persia, London.*

(Translation.)

November 13, 1909.

(Telegraphic.)

FOR your private information only. Terms asked by Russian Government are not reasonable; in our opinion no prospect of completing negotiations; in the event of, may we take the draft of Persian Government on Customs Administration for 700,000 krans? Security mint profit of 15,000 krans payable daily, secured by our own mint contract; we could secure if conditions are agreed to. Strongly recommend the business.

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Inclosure 6 in No. 194.

*Imperial Bank of Persia, London, to Imperial Bank of Persia, Tehran.*

(Translation.)

November 16, 1909.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram of 13th November.

Foreign Office in communication with St. Petersburg in regard to loans generally. Foreign Office wish to work on joint account with Russia; we have referred your telegram to Foreign Office, and we will reply as soon as possible.

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Inclosure 7 in No. 194.

*Imperial Bank of Persia, London, to Imperial Bank of Persia, Tehran.*

(Translation.)

November 27, 1909.

(Telegraphic.)

WE are forwarding to-day 25,000L bar silver; further 25,000L, 4th December; 25,000L, 11th December; 25,000L, 18th December; in view of outlook Persian trade and probable requirements Persian Government think it is very advisable arrange promptly mint contract.

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Inclosure 8 in No. 194.

*Imperial Bank of Persia, London, to Imperial Bank of Persia, Tehran.*

(Translation.)

November 29, 1909.

(Telegraphic.)

S. ROGERS private letter addressed to A. O. Wood 10th November, refer to your confidential semi-official letter 23rd October; telegraph what progress has been made regarding Mohammedan customs receipts.

[43694]

No. 195.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)*

(No. 794.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 29, 1909.*

I HAVE received a telegram from His Majesty's acting consul at Shiraz, reporting disturbances yesterday in the town. The rioters looted the apartments of the governor-general, and he was obliged to leave Government House to escape from them. Riots have temporarily subsided, but Mr. Bill fears that they will again break out, and doubts whether authority of governor-general can be re-established.

For the past fortnight there has been unrest at Shiraz, the details of which I am unaware, and more than once governor-general has announced his intention of resigning unless troops were sent to his assistance. I do not know who could fill his place if he carries out this threat.

I have pressed Persian Government to dispatch a force, and it is said that a regiment has left Isfahan already for Shiraz.

[43697]

No. 196.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)*

(No. 795.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, November 29, 1909.*

EASTERN Azerbaijan.

In continuation of my telegram No. 793 of 28th November, M. Poklewski has recommended that the Russian troops in Azerbaijan should limit their activity to punishing shahsevens, and allow Persian troops time to deal with Rahim Khan themselves, before taking action against him: the military dispositions reported in my above-mentioned telegram would, he considers, be too much of the nature of a general occupation.

[43794]

No. 197.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1345.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, November 29, 1909.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

If possible, please ascertain what stage has been reached in the negotiations, and what is the attitude of the Russian Government.

The Imperial Bank of Persia are anxious to learn our decision as soon as possible. Reference is to Tehran telegram No. 735 of 19th November.

[41438]

No. 198.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, November 29, 1909.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant relative to the preparation, for presentation to the Persian Government, of the account showing the expenditure incurred in the construction of the Central Persia telegraph line.

I am to inform you in reply that Sir E. Grey concurs in Viscount Morley's proposal to approve the views expressed by the Director-in-chief of the Indo-European Telegraph Department on this subject, and to instruct him to prepare the bill of costs accordingly.

I am, &c.

LOUIS Mallet.

[43833]

No. 199.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)*

(No. 796.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 30, 1909.*  
 RUSSIAN Government, M. Poklewski informs me, have now decided to withdraw from Ardebil the majority of their troops.

[43846]

No. 200.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)*

(No. 797.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 30, 1909.*  
 FOLLOWING sent to Bushire, Kerman, and Seistan, and repeated to India:—

A telegram has been received from telegraph inspector engaged on repair duty, stating that Sarhad Baluchis contemplate raiding the Narmeshir district, and other Baluchis may, it is feared, co-operate.

Is it possible to convey a warning similar to that of July last to the Baluchi Chiefs?

[43856]

No. 201.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)*

(No. 798.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, November 30, 1909.*  
 JOINT advance to Persian Government.

With reference to your telegram No. 1345 of the 29th November to St. Petersburg, I am informed that the banks not having received any replies to the proposals reported in my telegram No. 785 of the 19th November, the negotiations are at present at a standstill.

[43907]

No. 202.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received December 1.)*

Sir,

28, Oxford Street, Manchester, November 30, 1909.

WE are in receipt of your telegram of yesterday, and beg to thank you for your kind assent to our proposal that we should communicate direct with Sir George Barclay regarding the loading of oxide at Ormuz by steam-ship "Haddon Hall." We have duly wired Sir George Barclay, and hand you herewith copy of our message.

May we assume that we have the sanction of the Foreign Office to cable direct to His Majesty's Minister in regard to all similar loadings at Ormuz in the future? In this case we should of course keep you promptly advised of all communications, and send you copies of telegrams dispatched.

Awaiting the favour of your reply, we are, &c.

ELLINGER AND CO.

Inclosure in No. 202.

*Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Sir G. Barclay.*

(Telegraphic.)

*Manchester, November 29, 1909.*

FOREIGN OFFICE have sanctioned our cabling you direct that "Haddon Hall" will commence loading about 30th instant 500 tons oxide.

[43938]

No. 203.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 799.)

(Telegraphic.) R. *Tehran, December 1, 1909.*  
 SIR A. NICOLSON'S telegram No. 498 of the 28th November.

Russian Minister informs me that Persian Government have expressed sorrow for the attack on the Russian consul-general, promised to punish the culprits, and admitted their responsibility for compensation for Russian casualties and loss of property.

I do not see how this feeble and penniless Government can be expected to do more.

(Repeated to St. Petersburg.)

[43958]

No. 204.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 1.)*

(No. 501.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburg, December 1, 1909.*

YOUR telegram No. 1345.

I saw M. Isvolsky this afternoon, and I enquired if the Russian Government would object to an advance being made to the Persian Government by the Imperial Bank of Persia, if the present negotiations came to nothing. His Excellency said the question had not yet arisen, and when it did he would have to think it over.

[43119]

No. 205.

*Foreign Office to Treasury.*

(Confidential.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 1, 1909.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copies of correspondence which has passed between this department and the India Office relative to a proposal put forward by the Government of India that a survey should be undertaken in relation to the question of effecting a connection between Bushire and some point on the Jahrum-Aliabad-Firazabad section of the Bunder Abbas-Lar-Jahrum-Shiraz route.\*

I am to state that Sir E. Grey fully concurs in the opinion that the results of the operation proposed would be of the greatest use and profit, more especially in view both of the approaching expiration of the arrangement forbidding the construction of railways in Persia, which will leave His Majesty's Government free to develop the resources of the British sphere by this means, and of the prospect of the rapid advance of the Bagdad line which necessitates an immediate decision as to British railway policy in those regions.

I am accordingly to express Sir E. Grey's earnest hope that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury may see their way to consent to the imposition on Imperial revenues of half the cost of the proposed survey, viz., of 2,000 rupees for contingent expenses and 753 r. 12 a. a-month.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[44301]

No. 206.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 6.)*

(No. 623.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, November 26, 1909.*

M. ISVOLSKY informed me on the 24th instant that 300 men were to be recalled at once to Russia from the Kazvin force. I remarked that there would still be over 1,000 men there. He assented. I enquired if he had any news as to the whereabouts of Rahim Khan, and whether he intended to march on Tehran. He said that he had

\* Nos. 76, 142, and 175.

recently received no intelligence at all in regard to that individual. I said that the Persian Government forces had recently had a victory over the rebels, and that this would improve matters. M. Isovsky said that he had received no official information in regard to the victory. The road from Ardebil to Tabreez was, he said, still infested with brigands, and traffic along it was not safe. The Russian Government were debating what course they should adopt towards those fractions of the Shahsevens who had not fulfilled the obligations which they had undertaken. Now that there were Russian forces at Ardebil it was a question whether they should not be employed in punishing the refractory tribes.

M. Isovsky has not recurred to the passage in the speech from the Throne on the occasion of the opening of the Persian Medjlis, in which allusion was made to the presence of foreign troops in Persia. The "Novoe Vremya" had an article on the subject, censuring the Persian Government for having inserted such a passage, asserting that it was clear that the presence of Russian troops had been the means of maintaining order, which the Persians themselves were incapable of doing. The journal, which is hostile to M. Poklewski, blamed that gentleman for having permitted any such passage to have appeared in the speech. The contention of the press and of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is that in localities where Russian troops are placed order and security exist, and where matters are left to the Persian authorities the reverse is the case. It is probable that the attack on M. Passek and his caravan, which appears to have been a serious one, will, in the opinion both of the Ministry and of the press, afford full justification for the above contention, and I am afraid that this unfortunate incident will render it more difficult than before for M. Isovsky to withdraw Russian troops either from Kazvin, Tabreez, or Ardebil.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[44009]

No. 297.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 626.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, November 27, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith translations of two articles which have appeared in the "Bourse Gazette" and the "Russ"—both of them Liberal journals—on the subject of the attack on the Russian consul-general at Bushire.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 207.

Extract from the "Bourse Gazette."

(Translation.)

RUSO-PERSIAN relations seem degged by some evil destiny. In Northern Persia public security is being maintained by Russian troops, whilst it is being asserted in the Speech from the Throne and in the Medjlis that the Persian people are alarmed at their presence. The unpleasant impression produced by such language is still fresh when the news arrives that a Russian consul-general, while returning to his post in Southern Persia, has been subjected to an attack of unheard-of impudence. Six travelling caravans had availed themselves of the consul's protection. The most striking feature of the incident is the fact that the Russian consul-general should be travelling in such troubled times with so small an escort, especially when it is remembered that his English colleague has a whole detachment of British-Indian soldiers. At the same time there is no doubt that the reinforcement of the Russian consuls' escort would have evoked complaints against the Russian Government elsewhere as well as at Tehran. Our diplomacy, if it really values the prestige of Russia, will be obliged to make demands for satisfaction from the impudent Persian Government, and this will call forth fresh protests against Russian claims. A vicious circle is thus formed from which there is no escape; only when it is acknowledged by England and Russia alike that the geographical position of the latter gives her an indisputable right to restore order and pacify the country when the Persian Government is unable to do so will this circle be broken. This impudent attack illustrates the truth of a remark

we made a short time ago, to the effect that the Speech from the Throne was too optimistic. Moreover, it gives us a serious warning of the inevitability of fresh complications as long as the rights of Russia remain in their present undefined condition.

Inclosure 2 in No. 207.

Extract from the "Russ."

(Translation.)

IT is only by a stroke of luck that the Russian consul-general at Bushire was not killed in the attack made upon him recently, and it is fortunate that there were not more casualties. The incident is a very serious one, and must be regarded as such. It is of course natural that it should raise feelings of profound perplexity and displeasure in the mind of every Russian, but this does not mean going to the absurd length proposed by the "Novoe Vremya" of appealing for aid to British diplomacy and for the introduction of British troops into Southern Persia. We must first determine accurately the exact locality of the incident. It occurred on the road from Shiraz to Bushire, which is well known for the robber bands which infest it, for whom an attack on a caravan is the most ordinary of occurrences. The route is recognised as one of the most dangerous in Persia.

The disrespect shown to the Russian flag must be chiefly attributed to the part which Russia has played lately in Persia. She is supposed to have supported the ex-Shah, and Colonel Liakhov was looked upon as a Russian officer in Russian pay. The Persian people, and more especially the Bakhtiari (and the Bakhtiari are a south-western tribe), know nothing about diplomatic assumptions to the contrary. Russia must regain her lost prestige by her own efforts, and not with the help of England. Russia must demand the severest punishment of these robbers; how the punishment is effected is no business of ours, provided it is immediate. If the Persian Government is powerless to do this, and if it appeals to the Russian Government for assistance, it will be given, but it would not be correct for the Russian Government to offer it unasked. The Persian Government must decide this question, but it must also understand that Russia demands immediate satisfaction for the attack on her consular representative and for the blood of her soldiers. The remotest gorges of Laristan must learn that severe punishment awaits those who would dare raise a hand against a Russian consul.

[44023]

No. 208.

Mr. F. C. Strick to Mr. Mallet.—(Received December 2.)

Baltic House, Leadenhall Street, London,  
December 1, 1909.

Sir,

IT may interest you to learn that I received this morning the following telegram from my Bussorah house, dated the 30th ultimo, reading:—

"Mouintaojnr inquiring through Hajji Reis what is the freight 4,000 tons Ormuz oxide, early shipment. Further details Thursday."

As you doubtless know, the Hajji Reis referred to in this cable is the right-hand man of the Sheikh of Mohammerrah, who, I understand, is on close terms of friendship with the Mouintaojnr, and I have reason to believe that any proposals emanating from the Germans in regard to matters connected with the Sheikh of Mohammerrah or the Mouintaojnr would, in all probability, pass through him (Hajji Reis). It is hardly necessary for me to mention the connection between the Sheikh of Mohammerrah and Hajji Reis, as Major Cox, who, I understand, is now in England, must be more au courant with this than I am.

Immediately on receipt of the above telegram I dispatched, through the Imperial Bank of Persia, the following cable to my Tehran agent, Mr. David Brown:—

"The following is strictly private:—

"Mouintaojnr's agent, Mahomerrah, inquiring rate freight 4,000 tons oxide, prompt shipment. We do not understand what this means. Our opinion there is financial dispute between parties to contract. Naturally, if 4,000 tons shipped it will affect our offer. What is the position of negotiations?"

As mentioned in this message, I cannot understand why the Mouintojar should be making inquiries for freight, seeing that the contract which he is said to have made with Messrs. A. Weir and Co. in all probability stipulates, as all his contracts with is invariably did, that he has to supply oxide f.o.b., and has nothing to do with the carriage.

I cannot get away from the opinion which I have already expressed in regard to this contract, viz., that, although it may exist on paper, there is something mysterious about it, and it may perhaps be that Messrs. Weir only appear as figureheads, whereas, in reality, the actual buyers are Messrs. Ellinger and Co., of Manchester, Messrs. Weir holding it on trust on certain terms for account of Messrs. Ellinger. The latter, of course, could not appear as buyers in the contract, seeing, as you know, that they act as the agents for the Mouintojar in this country.

As mentioned in the cable from my Bussorah house, I may expect further information tomorrow, when I shall immediately pass same on to you; but, on the face of it, from the fact that the Mouintojar is making enquiries, it seems to me that there must be some dispute, financial or otherwise, in regard to the contract.

Should this surmise prove correct, there is, in my opinion, a great danger of the Mouintojar coming to an arrangement with the Germans, who, we know, are most anxious to get hold of the business, and further, this possibility is strengthened by the fact that, as there have been no shipments to Germany for over twelve months, that market must be in need of further supplies.

Yours very truly,  
FRANK C. STRICK.

[44119]

No. 209.

Notes communicated by M. de Eftel December 2, 1909.

(1.)

D'APRÈS des nouvelles reçues du consul à Orumiah, une concentration considérable de troupes turques se produit près de la frontière persane.  
Deux régiments, avec quatre canons et six mitrailleuses, sont arrivés à Baradost, Samot, Terquever, Detsvet, et Merguever.

Les soldats sont armés de fusils modernes Mauser.  
Un détachement de la cavalerie lamidienne se trouve à Desht avec Cheikh Kadyr (frère du défunt Cheikh Siddik).

Les chefs kurdes se joignent à eux.

(2.)

La situation sur le territoire litigieux est alarmante. Les Turcs y envoient des renforts et semblent vouloir occuper des positions au nord et au sud du Lac Orumiah.  
Des mesures énergiques devraient être prises d'urgence.

(3.)

M. Isvolsky serait très reconnaissant de connaître l'avis de Sir Edward Grey au sujet de cette activité déployée de réchef par les Turcs près d'Orumiah.

Pour sa part, il trouverait utile que les Ambassadeurs d'Angleterre et de Russie à Constantinople soient chargés d'attirer sérieusement l'attention de la Porte sur les événements ci-dessus signalés, qui se trouvent en contradiction avec les assurances données par elle à plusieurs reprises.

Ambassade Impériale de Russie,  
le 2 décembre, 1909.

[44040]

No. 210.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 800.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 2, 1909.

THE programme of the Cabinet, which contains the proposal to apply for an advance of 500,000, has been submitted to the Medjliss for discussion. I understand from Minister for Foreign Affairs that step will be approved, and application made almost immediately. A larger loan in the future is also foreshadowed whereby the advances now carrying exorbitant interest will be consolidated.

Although it may seem premature to discuss the matter at this early stage, I venture to make the following comments. From M. Moruard's statement (see my despatch No. 300 of the 27th October) it is evident that no further borrowing is possible on the security of the customs, but, in view of facts (1) that need of Persian Government is urgent; (2) that conversion of the advances from the two banks will make it possible substantially to reduce charges on customs; (3) that considerably increased revenues from the customs may be expected if things go right; (4) that we can rely on finding the means in Persia to recompense ourselves if things go wrong. I hope that two Governments may not refrain on account of this reason from negotiating the joint loan. The passport and telegraph revenues could be assigned as supplementary security if necessary.

In the meanwhile I would provisionally suggest following conditions, to be modified or developed as the course of the negotiations may demand:—

(1) Two Powers to approve the budget of the expenditure of the moneys, and a committee, including Hizat and Moruard, to supervise its execution. The budget to be approved only if it includes provisions for—

(2) The establishment of an efficient gendarmerie, with European officers as instructors;

(3) The reorganisation, with the aid of five or six French employés, of the financial administration;

(4) An undertaking in general terms on subject of railway concessions (see my despatch No. 206 of the 8th November).

Intentions of Medjliss are not yet known, but, with the exception of No. 2, I do not believe that any of the above conditions should prove unacceptable. Except in regions in which we are interested, Russian Government may object to the employment of any but Russian officers for such a gendarmerie, and I believe that Persian Government, rather than agree to this condition, would prefer, if assistance from other quarters were not forthcoming, to continue in the present necessitous condition, in which a state of things rendering intervention on a large scale inevitable must sooner or later occur.

I trust that in any case the conditions upon which His Majesty's Government eventually shall insist will not be of a nature to wreck the loan. The stability of the present régime cannot be used without a substantial advance, and in the end it might well turn out better economy for us that the conditions should be waived rather than that a loan to Persian Government should collapse. If financial assistance be given in instalments, supplies could be cut off if money was being unprofitably employed.

Until Persian Government makes its application, or at least until I am informed how far the conditions suggested meet with your approval, I shall not discuss the matter with M. Poklewski.

[43958]

No. 211.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

(No. 189.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 2, 1909.

PROPOSED advance to Persian Government.

I understand from your telegram No. 785 of the 19th November that the consent of the Russian Minister to the advance is conditional on the fulfilment of the four Russian conditions. Have the Persian Government only been told that such consent

[1684]

2 O

is necessary to any advance by the Russian Bank; or have the conditions themselves been actually presented to them?

Please refer to St. Petersburg telegram No. 501 of the 1st December and to your telegram No. 798 of the 30th November.

[44119]

No. 212.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 490.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 2, 1909.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

A considerable Turkish force is being concentrated on the Persian frontier. The objective of this movement appears to be the occupation of certain positions to the north and south of Lake Urumia. The above information is contained in a report from the Russian consul at Urumia.

If you can obtain any information on this subject, please telegraph.

[44130]

No. 213.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 801.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 3, 1909.*

SOUTHERN roads. See my despatch No. 201 of the 30th October.

The slight improvement reported on the Bushire-Ispahan road was only temporary. The road again appears to be very insecure.

[44164]

No. 214.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 802.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 3, 1909.*

JOINT advance to Persian Government.

Please refer to your telegram No. 190 of the 2nd December.

M. Poklewski presented your conditions to Minister for Foreign Affairs on behalf of his Government, but the Russian bank merely signified its readiness to make the advance when Russian Minister gave his permission. As only one of the four conditions concerned its business, the bank did not present the conditions itself.

It would be better, in my opinion, to discourage these small doles to the Persian Government now that negotiations are in sight for a substantial advance from the two Governments. They are likely to prevent the Medjliss from recognising as soon as they otherwise would, the necessity of applying to the two legations for a substantial loan.

[44220]

No. 215.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 4.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 3, 1909.*

I AM directed by Viscount Morley to enclose copy of a telegram from the Government of India, concurring in the proposal made in the telegram No. 680 of the 22nd August from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, and agreed to by Sir E. Grey's telegram No. 431 of the 23rd August, that Mr. Howson, telegraph officer, should be appointed vice-consul at Birjand pending further developments. The Government of India recommend the grant to Mr. Howson of a vice-consular allowance of 100 rupees a-month, together with an allowance of 185 rupees a-month for office expenses, sumptuary charges, house-rent, &c., subject to a proportionate reduction of the total allowance if the house-rent, now 35 rupees a-month, is later on reduced.

Lord Morley is, I am to say, prepared to approve these proposals, on learning that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury will accept a moiety of the estimated expenditure involved.

In the event of their acceptance being notified, I am to request that the necessary consular powers may be obtained for Mr. W. R. Howson.

I am, &amp;c.

R. RITCHIE.

*Inclosure in No. 215.*

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*November 13, 1909.*

PLEASE refer to telegram of 23rd August last from Foreign Office to Sir G. Barclay relative to Seistan.

Pending further developments, I agree that appointment of Howson as vice-consul, Birjand, is desirable, and I suggest that vice-consular allowance of 100 rupees per mensem, in addition to allowance of 185 rupees per mensem for house-rent, sumptuary charges, office expenses, &c., should be granted to him. In the event of house-rent, which is now 35 rupees per mensem, being reduced later, allowance will be proportionately reduced.

If this was your approval, we should be glad if arrangements for necessary consular powers could be made.

[44284]

No. 216.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 5.)*

(No. 803.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 5, 1909.*

AUTHORITY of Saham-ed-Dowleh, Governor of Fars, is being seriously threatened by Sowlet-ed-Dowleh. Latter is believed to have engineered attack on M. Passek in order to discredit governor-general, who is without the requisite military force either to apply pressure or to organise active operations. Governor-general has drawn up certain demands as condition of retaining office and presented them to the Persian Government. They include:—

1. That Sowlet should be ordered to co-operate in the maintenance of order, in default of which he should be dismissed as chief of his tribe.

2. That governor-general should be empowered to employ the entire revenue of province of Fars for the period of one year to satisfy pressing local needs, but, above all, to organise necessary force of troops.

M. Poklewski and I, on the strong recommendation of both consuls at Shiraz, before whom at a joint interview Saham-ed-Dowleh had exposed his demands, made representations yesterday in support of these demands, offering, moreover, to send instructions to our consuls to warn Sowlet-ed-Dowleh of the consequences to which his insubordination would lead him.

The sipahdar and Sardar Assad, to whom our joint representations were made, concurred entirely in the measures proposed except that they would not consent to put the whole of the revenue of Fars, amounting to 120,000*l.*, in hands of governor-general. Authorisation to raise a force with local funds had already been given to him, however. Prime Minister and Minister of Interior promised to consider our offer to convey a warning to Sowlet-ed-Dowleh.

[44293]

No. 217.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 5.)*

(No. 801.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 5, 1909.*

IN continuation of my telegram No. 800 of the 2nd December, I have the honour to report that the Medjliss in secret session has discussed the programme presented by the Cabinet. They are practically certain, I am informed secretly by a deputy, to

sanction the application for an advance of 500,000*l.* to be supplemented later by a larger loan, whereby the floating debt will be consolidated. Medjhis has also approved in principle the proposal that foreign employes should be introduced into the various departments. My informant tells me that Persians will be unwilling to give the engagement to Frenchmen, for they believe their suspicion that the French financial adviser is practically in the service of the two Governments is confirmed by passages in our Blue Books. I am of opinion that this difficulty may be overcome. Deputy confirms me in my belief that Medjhis will obstinately oppose the demand for the engagement of Russian military instructors for the gendarmerie.

Persian Government will, I am given to understand, apply in the course of the present week for the advance.

[44285]

No. 218.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received December 5.)

(No. 805.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 5, 1909.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Please refer to my telegram No. 490 of the 2nd December.

I am informed by M. Poklewski that his consul at Urmia has reported the appearance in the districts of Sonni, Buraidost, Tergavah, Dasht, and Mergaver of two regiments of Turkish troops with four guns and six quick-firers.

Russian consul-general at Tabreez has received a telegram from manager of Russian Road Company from Sujbalak announcing the dispatch to Manache and Inagado of 200 Turkish infantry and 300 cavalry, accompanied by two guns. Manager believes that similar movement of 100 Persian troops to Mahmediar in the Soldiz district is the cause of this activity.

Governor-General of Tabreez has informed Persian Government that 200 Turkish troops with two guns have been sent to Mahmediar, and that the Kaimakam of Pasveh has demanded the withdrawal of Persian troops from the town.

Beyond what manager of Russian Road Company has telegraphed to Mr. Miller, His Majesty's acting consul-general has no information.

[44307]

No. 219.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.*—(Received December 6.)

(No. 632.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, December 1, 1909.

M. ISVOLSKY remarked to me this afternoon that, in connection with the Bagdad Railway, it would be necessary that our two countries should converse on the policy to be pursued in respect to railways in Persia. This was not a question to be indefinitely postponed. The Duma deputies, when in London, had had several conversations with people in London in regard to linking up a Persian and the Indian railway system. The deputies had returned much impressed with what had been said to them, and were all desirous that through communication with India should be established. He was to see M. Khomiakov one of these days to have a talk with him on the subject. He knew that public opinion in England was not yet ripe for such a project, but, in order to satisfy that section of public opinion here who were in favour of a good understanding with England, he thought it would be a mistake to rule the question out of court. He foresaw that whatever arrangement might eventually be arrived at in regard to the Bagdad Railway, it was probable that there would be some discontent in the minds of many Russians, as no one in Russia had ever been in favour of the railway. If by any chance the agreement did not meet the requirements of Russian interests, there might even be a *retirement* in sections friendly to England, and this would be unfortunate. It would therefore be desirable if some understanding could be reached between the British and Russian Governments in respect to Persian railways, and especially as to a through route to India. This would serve as a set-off to any detriment or risks which Russian interests might suffer by the construction of the Bagdad Railway.

I asked M. Isvolsky whether the Duma deputies had spoken with any responsible people in London in respect to a *raccordement* with the Indian railways, as I was sure that the time had not yet come for such a project to be carried out. M. Isvolsky said that perhaps they were not, strictly speaking, responsible personages with whom the

deputies had conversed, but they were *hommes de valeur*. He knew that it was yet too early to realise a through route to India, but the question might be discussed with the view of its assuming a practical form "dans un avenir plus ou moins lointain." He was anxious that nothing should occur to weaken the *entente* with England, and I must know that there were many who were opposed to it. I told him that I was perfectly aware of that fact, and that I always bore in mind that the *entente* was a very young and tender plant, which had not struck deep roots as yet in the public mind of either country. I then dropped the subject, as I should like to receive replies to the questions which I ventured to put before you in my telegram No. 490 of the 30th November before discussing, even academically, the question with M. Isvolsky.

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

[44572]

No. 220.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 492.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 6, 1909.

ARDEBIL.

According to information supplied to me by the Russian chargé d'affaires, the Russian Government have decided, in view of the advance of the Persian troops, to hand over to them the task of dealing with the Shahsevars and restoring order, and are subsequently about to leave them a free hand by recalling their troops from the town.

With respect, however, to the losses suffered by Russian subjects, the Russian Government intend to remind the Persian Government that they are under the obligation to satisfy any claims for compensation arising out of the late brigandage at Ardebil.

[44285]

No. 221.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.*

(No. 704.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 6, 1909.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

The action of the Porte which is reported in Tehran telegram No. 805 of the 5th December is a violation of repeated undertakings, and the Russian Government are of opinion that serious representations should be made at Constantinople.

They have instructed their Ambassador to enquire as to the truth of these reports, and to take the proposed step, should the explanation offered by the Porte be unsatisfactory. You are authorised to associate yourself with the Ambassador in this action.

[44285]

No. 222.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1350.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 6, 1909.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Having regard to the fact that the action of the Porte reported in Tehran telegram No. 805 of the 5th December is a violation of repeated undertakings, Russian Government desire to make serious representations to the Turkish Government on this subject.

You should inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that when Russian Ambassador at Constantinople enquires as to the truth of these reports, he will have the support of His Majesty's chargé d'affaires, who has also been instructed to join him in taking the proposed step, should no satisfactory explanation be forthcoming.



[44040]

No. 223.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1352.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 6, 1909.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

You should endeavour to ascertain on what conditions, in the opinion of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Russian Government would be willing to participate in the advance, since it appears that the Persian Government will apply for it in the near future.

For reference see Tehran telegrams Nos. 800 and 804 of the 2nd and 5th December.

[44608]

No. 224.

*Mr. F. C. Strick to Mr. Mallet.—(Received December 7.)*

*Baltic House, Leadenhall Street, London,  
December 4, 1909.*

Sir,

IN further reference to my letter of the 1st instant, the following is a copy of a telegram I have received from my Bussorah house:—

"Please refer to our telegram of Tuesday. Mouintoutjar 4,000 tons, London, one or two shipments. When can you ship? What is the rate of freight."

In reply to this message I telegraphed as follows:—

"Seeing understand Mouintoutjar has made a contract with A. Weir and Co., l.o.b., chartering hands Ellinger and Co., what does it mean Mouintoutjar interfering? Obtain all the information you can from Hajj Reis, and report immediately by wire. We can carry oxide. Try to ascertain what they will pay."

Yours, &amp;c.

FRANK C. STRICK.

[44627]

No. 225.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 7.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 7, 1909.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence ending with the letter of this Office dated the 16th November, 1909, I am directed by Viscount Morley to enclose, for communication to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, paraphrase of a telegram from the Government of India, dated the 1st December, suggesting that Mr. Scott, a retired officer of the Survey Department, should enter the company's service under the arrangements therein explained.

I am to inquire whether the company would wish that the Government of India should instruct Mr. Scott to proceed to Mohammerah on the terms as to pay mentioned in the telegram, viz., 1,000 rupees a-month and travelling expenses.

I am, &amp;c.

R. RITCHIE.

Inclosure in No. 225.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.**December 1, 1909.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

MR. SCOTT, a distinguished officer of the Survey Department, on the retired list, having varied experience, will join the service of the oil company on a salary of 1,000 rupees a-month and travelling expenses, and establishment costing probably about 600 rupees a-month, or even more. There will also be some expenditure on

outfit, instruments, and tents. May we give instructions to Scott to proceed to Mohammerah on his terms as to pay?

As regards the desired scale of the map, the Surveyor-General seems to think it unusual. I call attention to this point as, after consultation with the local agent, the company may like to have Scott's advice on it.

[44635]

No. 226.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 7.)*

(No. 806.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 7, 1909.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

My immediately preceding telegram.

Last night Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me that forty additional Turkish soldiers had been sent to Urumia and that Turkish troops were being reinforced on the frontier.

At Anhar, about 12 miles north-west of Urumia, there had been fighting between Turkish soldiers and Persian villagers, in the course of which several of the latter were killed.

Minister for Foreign Affairs asked me to treat this information as personal, for although Persian Government are making representations at Constantinople, they do not for the moment desire our co-operation.

[44040]

No. 227.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 7, 1909.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence relative to the question of a joint advance to be made to the Persian Government by His Majesty's and the Russian Governments, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copies of telegrams from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,\* reporting that an application for such advance may shortly be expected, and setting forth the conditions on which, in his opinion, it should be acceded to.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey concurs in the view expressed by Sir G. Barclay, that such an advance is necessary to enable the Persian Government to administer the country satisfactorily, and, indeed, to render possible the continuance of constitutional rule there, and he would further point out that a valuable opportunity is thereby offered for obtaining the consent of the Persian Government to the institution of guards on the southern trade routes and to concessions for the construction of railways. He also attaches great importance to the conversion of the debt owed by the Persian Government to the Imperial Bank of Persia and to the Russian Discount Bank, which, he considers, should be made a necessary condition of any loan.

With this exception, he considers the conditions proposed by Sir G. Barclay in his telegram No. 800 to be sufficient, and I am to state that he would be glad to receive, at Viscount Morley's early convenience, an expression of his Lordship's views on the subject.

I have, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[43907]

No. 228.

*Foreign Office to Messrs. Ellinger and Co.*

Gentlemen,

*Foreign Office, December 7, 1909.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 26th and 30th ultimo relative to telegraphic correspondence between you and His Majesty's Legation at Tehran.

In reply to the former of these communications, you were informed by telegraph

\* Nos. 210 and 217.

that there was no objection to your addressing a message to His Majesty's Minister direct, so long as it was made clear to him that this mode of procedure had the sanction of this department.

In reply to the latter of your two letters, I am to state that you are correct in assuming that Sir E. Grey has no objection to your following the same course in the future with regard to proposed shipments of red oxide from the Island of Hormuz.

I am, &c.

LOUIS MALET.

[44672]

No. 229.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 8.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, with reference to the letter from the India Office of the 1st November, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 5th December, relative to proposals for the installation of wireless telegraphy in the Persian Gulf.

*India Office, December 7, 1909.*

Inclosure in No. 229.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

December 5, 1909.

WIRELESS telegraphy in the Persian Gulf. My telegram of the 30th October last.

We propose to establish eventually stations at the following places: Bushire, Bandar Abbas, Bahrein, Dubai, Kuwait, and Lingah, amongst which there should be intercommunication. Establishment of 600-mile wireless station at Jask, as suggested in despatch of the 21st October last, being assumed, a range of 200 miles would suffice at the six places above mentioned in ordinary circumstances, but, having regard to the greater distance which separates Lingah from Bushire, it seems desirable to have 300-mile ranges at those places. The cost of buildings would amount to between 20,000 rupees and 30,000 rupees for each station, and cost of furniture to about 1,000 rupees. Estimate for six stations (2 apart from) buildings and furniture, is approximately 95,500 rupees, and the annual recurring charge for the six stations 68,400 rupees. It is proposed that these stations should be fitted for a normal working wave length of 600 metres, but with capacity for transmission of wave length up to 803 metres, and capable of receiving any wave length of 600 metres and over. Wave lengths will, in the opinion of the naval commander-in-chief, excellently suit naval work.

We send you this outline of our proposals as you desired to consider the Indian and Persian Gulf scheme as a whole, but in so doing we would explain that we do not propose to introduce the Gulf scheme until the state of our finances shows considerable improvement; and, in any event, when funds are available, we propose to give precedence, [? except in] the case of Jask, where a temporary installation is now being put up, to our inland wireless scheme.

[43492]

No. 230.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.*

(No. 371.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 8, 1909.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 930 of the 22nd ultimo on the subject of the renewal of the contract between the Société du Tonkin and the Russian shipping company.

I concur in your view that, in event of the failure of the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to obtain the requisite promise from the Imperial Ottoman Bank, local action by His Majesty's Embassy to obtain the contract for Messrs. Strick would be

unlikely to be more effective, but I doubt whether the London board of directors of the bank exercise sufficient influence in the councils of that institution to offer a reasonable chance of success to an application made to them by Messrs. Strick, supported by His Majesty's Government.

In these circumstances, the efforts of His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg should be directed, as the time for the expiration of the present contract more nearly approaches, towards inducing the Russian Government to press for its renewal. Their influence might possibly be exercised on the Ottoman Bank through the French Government.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[44771]

No. 231.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 9.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 6th December, relative to the proposed appointment of Mr. Howson as vice-consul at Birjand.

*India Office, December 8, 1909.*

Inclosure in No. 231.

*Viscount Morley to Government of India.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

*India Office, December 6, 1909.*

APPOINTMENT of vice-consul, Birjand. Your telegram of the 13th November last.

I am in communication with the Foreign Office on the subject. Please let me have Howson's Christian names by telegraph.

[44983]

No. 232.

*Sublime Porte to Turkish Press.—(Communicated to Foreign Office December 9, 1909.)*

(Télégraphique.)

Le commandant de notre petit détachement à Seldouze (frontière turco-persane) nous signale que des troupes persanes avec éléments de tribu kurde se sont massées dans le village Mehmed Yur, près Seldouze, observent une attitude menaçante contre nos effectives.

Estimant que nos différends de frontière avec la Perse doivent être apaisés dès que notre voisine aura recouvré son état normal, nous avons donné au commandant de notre détachement ordre formel de ne point avancer et se borner, le cas échéant, à repousser toute attaque. Nous avons en même temps prié le Gouvernement persan de donner à ses troupes instructions en vue d'éviter tout choc.

[44830]

No. 233.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)*

(No. 807.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 9, 1909.*

SOUTHERN roads.

In continuation of my telegram No. 801 of the 3rd December, I have to report that Kuzghui tribesmen are blocking the Shiraz-Ispahan road at a point about 10 miles distant from the latter town.

Between Shiraz and Kazeroun also the road is most insecure.

I am informed that fighting has taken place south of Kazeroun, but no details are yet to hand.

[44842]

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey—(Received December 9.)*

(No. 504.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 9, 1909.*

YOUR telegram No. 1352 of the 6th December: Proposed advance to Persia.

Information similar to that communicated by Sir G. Barclay had also reached M. Isvolsky, but his Excellency was of opinion that the Minister of Finance was not disposed to advance any money, especially on security of a doubtful value. I promised to furnish him with some views which had been put forward by Sir G. Barclay as to the means by which some security might possibly be found, and I will send him an abstract of the ideas submitted by Sir G. Barclay in his telegram No. 880 of the 2nd December. I could see that M. Isvolsky was opposed to any advance being made by the Imperial Bank alone, and this would give the appearance of a weakening in our joint understanding with regard to Persian affairs. A little later on I will endeavour to ascertain M. Isvolsky's views as to the conditions which would be required by Russia in the event of the Minister of Finance being induced to withdraw the objections which he will probably put forward. His Excellency had no suggestion to make at present.

No. 235.

[43512]

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Johnstone.*

(No. 61.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 9, 1909.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 152 of the 21st ultimo, relative to a proposed expedition to the region of the Persian Gulf, organised by the Royal Danish Geographical Society.

It would be well that the Danish Government should realise that His Majesty's Government will follow with interest the proceedings of the expedition, and I therefore concur in your suggestion that you should mention the matter to the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs and ask his Excellency in a friendly manner to give you such information as he may be able to furnish as to the scope of the undertaking.

I am, &amp;c.

E. GREY.

[44164]

No. 236.

*Foreign Office to Imperial Bank of Persia.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 9, 1909.*

WITH reference to papers left at this Office by Sir T. Jackson on the 29th ultimo relative to the financial affairs of the Persian Government, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, according to telegraphic reports from His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg and Minister at Tehran, the four conditions laid down by the Russian Minister at the latter capital as indispensable if any advance is to be made by the Russian Discount Bank were presented by him to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, but the bank itself merely notified its readiness to lend when permitted to do so by M. Poklewski. This procedure was adopted because three of the conditions did not relate to the bank's business.

It is understood that, failing satisfaction on the points insisted on by their representative, the Russian Government are likely to object to any advance being made by the Imperial Bank of Persia, and they would in any case require time to think the matter over should such a situation arise.

I am to add, for the confidential information of your board, that there is every probability that the Persian Government will within a few days apply to His Majesty's and the Russian Governments for a substantial advance.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[44962]

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey—(Received December 10.)*

(No. 507.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 10, 1909.*

SCHEME for guards on Bnshire-Ispahan route.

In reply to a further request for his answer on this subject, M. Isvolsky said that he hoped soon to be in a position to give a written reply. His Excellency has twice assured me verbally that no objection would be raised by the Russian Government to the scheme proposed, but all the same the delay in putting his answer in writing would seem to indicate that a scheme for police in the Russian sphere is being drawn up, and that the Russian Government would wish the two projects to be put forward conjointly.

No. 238.

[44883]

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.\**

(No. 1354.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 10, 1909.*

SITUATION on the Turco-Persian frontier.

I am informed by the Turkish Ambassador that the Porte has taken the following action: The advance of the detachment at Solduz has been stopped; the officer commanding has been ordered to act strictly on the defensive, and a communication has been made to Persian Government requesting them to send such instructions to their troops as will avert a collision.

No. 239.

[44220]

*Foreign Office to Treasury.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 10, 1909.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copies of correspondence relative to the proposed temporary appointment of a consular representative of His Majesty at Birjand.†

It will be seen from these papers that the Russian consul in Seistan has asked his Government for leave to pass the winter at Birjand, which is the capital of the province of Kahu, and at present a place of greater importance than Nasratabad, where the consuls in Seistan reside.

It appears to His Majesty's consent that, if the request of his Russian colleague is granted, His Majesty's Government should not remain without an accredited representative at Birjand, and this view, which has the support of His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, the Government of India, and the India Office is shared by Sir E. Grey.

I am accordingly to express the hope that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury may see their way to accept as a charge on Imperial revenues one-half of the expense involved in the appointment of the vice-consul, which amounts in all to 285 rupees a-month, subject to a possible subsequent reduction.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.

No. 240.

[44627]

*Foreign Office to Anglo-Persian Oil Company.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 10, 1909.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he asked to be forwarded to the India Office, for the information of the Government of India, copy of your letter of the 1st ultimo relative to the proposed topographical survey of south

\* Also to Mr. Marling (No. 707), and Sir G. Barclay (No. 494).

† Sir G. Barclay, No. 680, Telegraphic, August 22; to Sir G. Barclay, No. 431, Telegraphic, August 23 India Office, December 3, 1909.

western Persia, and that a telegram has now been received in reply to the communication addressed to them on the subject.

In this telegram the Government of India state that Mr. Scott, a distinguished officer of the Survey Department, on the retired list, having varied experience, will join your company's service at a salary of 1,000 rupees a-month and travelling expenses, and establishment costing probably about 600 rupees a-month, or even more. There will also be some expenditure on outfit, instruments, and tents.

I am accordingly to enquire, at the request of the Government of India, whether they should instruct Mr. Scott to proceed to Mohammurah on the terms mentioned as to pay.

I am to add that, as regards the desired scale of the map, the Government of India state that their surveyor-general seem to think it unusual. They observe that they mention this point as, after consultation with the local agent, your company may like to have Mr. Scott's advice on it.

I am, &c.  
W. LANGLEY.

[45103]

No. 241.

*Mr. Mayling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 11.)*

(No. 366.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, December 11, 1909.

TERCO-PERSIAN frontier.

See your telegrams No. 706 of the 9th December and No. 707 of yesterday.

Information similar to that contained in last paragraph of former of these two telegrams (repeating Tehran No. 896) has reached M. Tcharykoff, who intends to await invitation from Persian Government before acting here, and has telegraphed to his Government proposing this course.

In answer to enquiries made by M. Tcharykoff and myself, Hilmi Pasha has assured us that the action taken at Soldaz was purely for defensive purposes, and that there has been no movement of troops in the Urmia district.

[45320]

No. 242.

*Mr. F. C. Strick to Mr. Mallet.—(Received December 13.)*

*Baltic House, Leadenhall Street, London,  
December 11, 1909.*

Sir,

I REG to inform you that since my letter of the 4th instant I have exchanged the following further telegrams with my Birsarah house relating to the proposed shipment of oxide by the Moin-ut-Tojar from Ormuz Island:—

*Sent December 1.* "Have you seen Haji Reis?"

*Received December 5-6.* "Haji Reis: Muekie Mohammurah to-day."

*Received December 6-7.* "Haji Reis: Apparently he is not aware what it means; states Moin-ut-Tojar ships where pleases; declines give idea rate; suggest telegraph immediately the lowest rate that can be accepted; endeavour to keep the business in hand."

*Sent December 8.*—"January shipment: Will carry about 4,000 tons of oxide 22s. 6d., or we are open to buy 40s. Fob. Please see Haji Reis to-morrow. You may allow Reis commission if you think it will lead to a good result."

*Received December 9-10.*—"Going Mohammurah to-morrow."

*Received December 10.*—"Reis states Hamburg American line offered 20s. January shipment; believes Moin-ut-Tojar shipping against Ellinger's sale, but wiring Moin-ut-Tojar your offer; proposes freight subject Moin-ut-Tojar's acceptance 20s. 4,000 tons one shipment, 22s. two; asks commission 2 per cent. on freight or 3 per cent. sale. What is your opinion?"

*Sent December 10.* "We will agree 4,000 tons 20s. one, 22s. two shipments, at our option."

"We will agree commissions freight or sale."

"Do not understand what you mean 'against Ellinger's sales.'"

[45285]

No. 241°.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 13.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 11, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant on the subject of a request which the Persian Government are thought likely to make for a loan in the near future. Viscount Morley finds no observations to offer in respect of the proposals suggested by Sir G. Boreley in his telegram of the 2nd instant. But he thinks it is right at this early stage to express his strong doubt whether any further financial assistance ought to be given to Persia out of Indian revenues, or at the risk of imposing a charge upon them. It will not be easy, for instance, to show what direct interest India has in the continuance of constitutional rule in Persia, and it will be very easy and not unreasonable for Indian politicians to ask why they should pay for the security in Persia of a constitutional system strictly denied to themselves. It is true, again, that India is part of the Empire, and should take its share in the burdens of Empire. The moment, however, is not a happy one for resort to this line of argument, as Indians are now sharply resenting a denial to them of equality of citizenship within the Empire, by colonial communities not themselves contributing to its defence. It may be true, indeed, that order in Persia might help Indian commerce. But Lord Morley is not convinced that improvement in the sphere of Indian trade by means of this kind is assured enough to justify the imposition of new burdens upon the general body of Indians. Nor is he convinced that even the conversion of the Persian debt would strike either the judgment or the imagination of the Indian taxpayer as a specifically Indian interest.

While, therefore, he is reluctantly obliged to assume responsibility for the loan of 100,000*l.* to which he agreed in May last, Lord Morley is not prepared to recommend his council to sanction any further advance.

I am, &c.  
R. RITCHIE.

I have also exchanged telegrams with my Teheran agent, Mr. David Brown, as follows:—

*Received December 7.*—"Referring to your telegram of 1st December, there is every probability concession Moin-ut-Tojar will be cancelled very soon. A company has been formed, and offers 400,000 krans yearly for mining rights Persian Gulf. There appears to be disinclination to consider our offer.

"With regard to 4,000 tons, as mentioned your telegram of 1st December, think it likely Moin-ut-Tojar endeavouring to ship as much as possible before the concession cancelled. It would appear to be in contravention of Weir contract. If you can obtain definite proof of Moin-ut-Tojar having contracted for such shipment, so that I might submit it to British Minister, there is [no<sup>e</sup>] reason to believe British Legation would withdraw support from Moin-ut-Tojar. I could obtain then full support British Minister, which is very essential."

*Sent December 8.*—"For your information, we have telegraphed our Bussorah house to-day as follows:—

"January shipment will carry about 4,000 tons of oxide, 22s. 6d., or we are open to buy 40s. f.o.b. (Ormuz). Please see Haji Reis to-morrow. You may allow Reis commission if you think it will lead to good result. Do you know shareholders' proposed company? For how many years will company pay 4,000 krans annually? If you consider large yearly payment preferable to lump sum, we will pay 500,000 krans yearly for ten years, our option further ten years. If your negotiations for concession are unsuccessful, will it be possible to obtain an interest in company or to come to some arrangement with company for supplies of Ormuz oxide?"

Yours faithfully,

FRANK C. STRICK.

[45415]

No. 243.

*India Office to Foreign Office.*—(Received December 14).

Sir,

*India Office, December 13, 1909.*

WITH reference to the correspondence ending with your letter of the 22nd November, 1907, as to the dispatch of twenty men from India, for a period of six months, for the protection of the Oil Syndicate's works near Ahwaz, I am directed to enclose copy of a letter from the Government of India, from which it will be seen that, as a result of the prolonged absence of these men from India, it has been found necessary to incur further expenditure to the amount of rupees 4,573:6:8 (304*l.* 17*s.* 10*d.*) for the replacement of the horses, saddlery, &c., lent by the 18th (P.W.O.) Tiwana Lancers for the use of the eight cavalrymen who accompanied the force.

I am to request that, if Sir E. Grey sees no objection, the circumstances may be explained to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, and that they may be moved to accept a moiety of the amount involved as a charge upon the British Exchequer.

It will be observed that instructions have been given to the resident in the Persian Gulf that the horses, saddlery, &c., if not required at Ahwaz, should be used to replace deficiencies elsewhere within the jurisdiction of the Persian Gulf Residency.

I am, &c.

R. RITCHIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 243.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.*

My Lord,

*Simla, October 7, 1909.*

WE have the honour to refer to our telegrams dated the 15th October and the 11th November, 1907, and to your Lordship's telegram dated the 22nd November, 1907, regarding the dispatch from India of a guard of two British officers, twelve

\* Evidently mistake in cable.

infantry, and eight cavalry for the protection of the Oil Syndicate's works in the vicinity of Ahwaz.

2. In our telegram of the 11th November, 1907, we intimated that the initial cost of this guard would be about 4,000 rupees. In May 1909 the military authorities represented that the cavalrymen of the guard, who left India on the 7th December, 1907, had been away from their regiment for over a year and a-half, and considerable inconvenience had been caused to the regiment by reason of the shortage of the horses, saddlery, and line-gear which the men took with them. Accordingly, with a view to enabling the regiment to replace the deficiencies at once, we sanctioned the purchase of the above-mentioned horses, saddlery, and line-gear at the values assessed by the Regimental Committee, the aggregate cost amounting to rupees 4,573:6:8. We trust that our action, which was taken in anticipation of your approval, will now be confirmed, and that His Majesty's Government will agree to bear a moiety of the cost.

3. We have instructed the political resident in the Persian Gulf that the horses, saddlery, and line-gear, if not required at Ahwaz, should be used to replace deficiencies elsewhere within the jurisdiction of the Persian Gulf Residency.

4. The guard is now being reduced to four sowars in accordance with the instructions in your telegram, dated the 20th September, 1909.

5. A copy of the correspondence on the subject is enclosed.

We have, &c.

MINTO.

O'M. CREAGH.

J. O. MILLER.

W. L. HARVEY.

S. P. SINHA.

H. H. RISLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 243.

Major-General Sir A. A. Barrett to Government of India.

Simla, May 7, 1909.

IN forwarding for the orders of Government the despatch from the General Officer Commanding, 7th (Meerut) Division, dated the 11th August, 1908, and enclosures, regarding the adjustment of a bill for rupees 4,573:6:8 preformed by the officer commanding, 18th Lancers, on account of eight horses and eight sets of saddlery and line-gear taken by eight men of that regiment who proceeded in December 1907 to Ahwaz to augment the consular escort there, I am directed by the commander-in-chief to recommend that the sanction of Government may be accorded to the early payment of the bill.

Inclosure 3 in No. 243.

Colonel Pirie to the Assistant Adjutant-General, 7th (Meerut) Division.

Delhi, August 1, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter dated the 14th February, 1908, forwarding Adjutant-General in India's letter dated the 8th February, 1908. As it is now eight months since the additional escort proceeded to Persia, I presume the consular authorities have taken over both horses and saddlery which the escort took with them from the regiment.

I would, therefore, request that the contingent bills for the price of eight horses and saddlery forwarded under this office letter, dated the 3rd December, 1907, to the brigade-major, Meerut Cavalry Brigade (copies attached), may now be adjusted.

Resubmitted, with reference to your letter dated the 8th February, 1908.

JOHN NIXON, Major-General,  
Commanding 7th (Meerut) Division.

The Adjutant-General in India.

# CONTINGENT BILL.

Rupees.

Amount of allotment .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..
Amount expended to end of the previous month .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..
Balance in hand, excluding the amount of this bill .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..

EXPENDITURE on account of price of Eight Horses for (Persia) Consular Escort incurred by 18th (P.W.O.) Tiwana Lancers during December 1907.

Serial No.	Date.	Details of Expenditure.	Number or Quantity.	Rate.	Per.	Amount.
		Price of eight horses selected for consular escort duty (Regimental Committee proceedings attached)	8 horses .. .. .	..	..	Rs. 3,788 0 0
		Authority. Assistant Adjutant-General, 7th (Meerut) Division, telegram No. 6866 c.				

Certified that the above charges have been necessarily incurred in the interests of the State, and that all receipts for sums of 10 rupees and under, except those for postage and telegrams, have been destroyed.

(Comtersigned.)

Received payment:

C. P. W. PIRIE, Colonel,  
Commanding 18th (P.W.O.) Tiwana Lancers.  
Delhi, December 3, 1908.

Proceedings of a Regimental Committee assembled at Delhi on the 2nd December, 1907, by order of officer commanding, Delhi, for the purpose of valuing eight horses of the regiment selected to proceed to Ahwaz, Persia, on consular guard duty to His Majesty's vice-consul.

President:  
Colonel C. P. W. Pirie.

Members:  
Lieutenant R. H. Marsh.  
Lieutenant C. H. Howell.

The Committee having assembled pursuant to order, proceeded to value the horses as shown below:—

Regimental No.	Colour.	Class.	Sex.	† Squadron.	Age.	Value.
2171	Bay .. .. .	Aust.	G.	R.C.	8 years ..	Rs. 534 0 0
1746	Bay .. .. .	G.B.	G.	R.C.	9 .. .. .	441 0 0
18 6	Chest .. .. .	G.B.	G.	L.C.	9 .. .. .	411 0 0
1 92	Chest .. .. .	G.B.	G.	L.C.	9 .. .. .	441 0 0
1845	Bay .. .. .	G.B.	G.	R.D.	9 .. .. .	411 0 0
1929	Bay .. .. .	G.B.	G.	R.D.	8 .. .. .	445 0 0
2052	Chest .. .. .	G.B.	G.	L.A.	7 .. .. .	495 0 0
2188	Bay .. .. .	G.B.	G.	L.A.	6 .. .. .	550 0 0
Total .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	3,788 0 0

A contingent bill for the total amount is attached to the proceedings.

C. P. W. PIRIE, Colonel,  
18th (P.W.O.) Tiwana Lancers. } President.  
R. H. MARSH, Lieutenant,  
18th (P.W.O.) Tiwana Lancers. } Members.  
C. H. HOWELL, Lieutenant,  
18th (P.W.O.) Tiwana Lancers. }



[5405]

No. 245.

*The Imperial Bank of Persia to Foreign Office.—(Received December 14.)*

Dear Mr. Maxwell,

25, Abchurch Lane, London, December 14, 1909.

I SEE by the morning papers the Persian Government has applied to the British and Russian Legations for a loan of 500,000. If they succeed, ought we not to insist on their paying the interest due on the loans both from His Majesty's Government and the bank; also pay up for the 30,000. worth of the bank's silver misappropriated by the mint, and further, open the mint for the coinage of silver?

Yours sincerely,

T. JACKSON.

[45474]

No. 246.

*Sir G. Balfour to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)*

(No. 809.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Tehran, December 14, 1909.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance visited two legations yesterday, and applied for an advance on two Governments of 500,000, urgently needed by Persian Government. We promised to telegraph this application to our Governments.

Without discussing conditions, we both endeavoured to elicit views of Persian Government as to security for advance, employment of money, control of expenditure, and the engagement of foreign agents, but we found Ministers as yet unable to state their views with more precision and in greater detail than as follows:—

Persian Government offer at present no security. They hope for a considerable loan later for consolidation at low interest of the floating debt, which would reduce charges on custom-house, thus enabling them to provide for necessary security. Ministers stated that money was to be used for restoration of order, for which formation of an army and gendarmerie was needed, and for reforms, especially financial. They said they were preparing and would communicate to the two legations a detailed programme of expenditure, and also scheme of control, of which we could gather no clear idea except that M. Bizot was to be given more influence than heretofore, and was to superintend its execution. If foreign advisers were found necessary they would be engaged, the Medjlis having approved their employment in principle, but as regards finance, they wished for the present to try how far changes in Persian staff and the employment of enlightened persons would suffice to effect necessary reforms.

This is not very encouraging, but I trust two Governments will not refuse to discuss an advance. For the first time there seem to be indications that Persian Government is sincerely trying to prepare a sensible budget and a scheme for control.

Russian Minister is telegraphing in above sense.

(Repeated to St. Petersburg.)

[45467]

No. 247.

*Sir G. Balfour to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)*

(No. 810.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 14, 1909.

JOINT advance to Persian Government.

In continuation of my telegrams No. 800 of the 2nd December and 809 of the 11th December respectively, I have the honour to report that I have communicated to M. Pokrovsky substance of four conditions tentatively suggested in my first-mentioned telegram. With the exception of No. 2 he raised no objection to them. As regards the gendarmerie he would wish to stipulate, subject of course, to our requirements in the south of Persia, for the exclusive employment of Russian instructors. I believe

that he would also hold out for the four conditions reported in my telegram No. 778 of the 15th November, upon which the recent proposed bank's advance was made conditional. I informed him that I was reluctant to overload our demands, and that I feared the advance might be wrecked by his proposed modification of the second condition which I had suggested.

[45473]

No. 248.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)*

(No. 509.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, December 14, 1909.

PROPOSED joint advance to the Persian Government.

In a conversation which I had with M. Isvolsky this afternoon I said that both Powers desired to avoid intervention in Persia, but that a situation might arise which might render it inevitable unless the Persian Government were shortly provided with some funds. M. Isvolsky replied that at the present moment the Russian Government did not feel disposed to be particularly amiable to the Persian Government, since the latter had of late been adopting an irritating attitude towards Russia, and this attitude was apparently adopted on purpose.

I remarked that the provision of means for the establishment of order in Persia was as much in the interests of England and Russia as in those of Persia herself. In fact, my concern was rather for our joint interests than for those of the Persian Government. M. Isvolsky then shifted his ground to the opposition raised by the Finance Minister to granting to Persia any further loans or advances. His Excellency acknowledged that there was an undoubted improvement in Russian finances, but said that M. Kokovtsov kept a tight hand on the purse-strings, and that he doubted whether he would be able to induce him to loosen them. How and where were His Majesty's Government going to find the money required for the joint advance? I professed ignorance on this point.

(Confidential.)

Later on M. Isvolsky asked whether we could not suggest some sort of transaction which might overcome M. Kokovtsov's objections and relieve Russia of the necessity of herself putting down her share of the joint advance. M. Isvolsky's remarks were very vague, and gave little indication of what was passing in his mind. He gave me no clue when I asked if he contemplated a joint syndicate, or what? He suggested that perhaps I might ask you if it would not be possible to come to some arrangement between the two Governments to facilitate the object in view. M. Isvolsky's remarks do not give us much to go upon, but he mentioned that he recollected dimly that we had on a previous occasion made certain suggestions. I am looking up this point in previous papers, and meanwhile should be glad if you would give me any suggestions which I could submit to M. Isvolsky.

[45572]

No. 249.

*Anglo-Persian Oil Company to Foreign Office.—(Received December 15.)*

Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London,  
December 13, 1909.

Sir,

I THINK it right to inform you that I have to-day received a telegram, dated Mohammerah, the 9th December, from Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co., this company's agents in Persia, as follows:

"A. B. Lloyd, now at Maidan-i-Naphtun, telegraphs that there is possibility of fighting between sections of the Bakhtiari native guard. G. B. Reynolds is at Maidan-i-Naphtun. Have asked the British consul at Ahwaz to come at once with his escort to Maidan-i-Naphtun."

I had heard by a letter dated the 18th October from Maidan-i-Naphtun that there had been a certain amount of friction between the head of the Bakhtiari guard and Mr. Willms, who was then acting as *locum tenens* for Mr. G. B. Reynolds, owing to the head of the Bakhtiari guard, so Mr. Willms wrote, extracting blackmail from the



native employés of the company to an extent which was making the position impossible, but I trusted to the friction being removed on the return of Mr. Reynolds to Maidan-i-Naphtun, and in fact our Persian agents wrote on the 6th November, before Mr. Reynolds's return, stating that the trouble with the head of the guard had been temporarily arranged, and that Mr. Willans was of opinion that matters would run fairly smoothly for a time.

I enclose an extract from our Persian agents' letter, dated the 20th November, received on the 11th instant, with copies of the enclosures therein mentioned, on the subject of a claim made by two men, Lutfi Ali and Mohammod Jawod.

I allude to these two subjects because one or the other may have some bearing on the present situation, although the telegram above quoted would appear to be reporting an internal trouble between two sections of the guard.

I have, &c.

C. W. WALLACE,  
Vice-Chairman.

#### Inclosure 1 in No. 249.

*Extract from Letter from the Persian Agents of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company,  
dated November 20, 1909.*

BAKHTIARIS. We enclose copy of a letter received by Mr. Willans from two Larish khans, who, as you will see, threaten to put difficulties in the way of the company should any operations connected with road making or pipe-line laying be commenced without previous reference to themselves.

Not knowing the two Bakhtiari persons who have written in, we have thought it as well to write the Samsam-es-Sultaneh and the Sardar Multasham on the matter, and enclose copy of our letter in this regard.

As you are aware, the agreement made by the Concessions Syndicate (Limited) with the Bakhtiari chiefs stipulates that compensation is to be paid by us for any cultivated land required for the purpose of the company's work, and further states that any dispute as regards the amount of compensation to be paid shall be referred to His Britannic Majesty's consul, Mohammerah.

No difficulty or occasion for interference in the laying of the pipe-line should therefore occur, and it can only occur through the above-mentioned two Bakhtiari, or the persons instigating them, deliberately taking steps to make trouble, an event which we sincerely trust will not happen.

#### Inclosure 2 in No. 249.

*Larish Khans to Mr. Willans.*

(Translation.)

After compliments.)

[Undated.]

IN accordance with information which we have received, we learn that on Betwand and Bahaduran lands you have built a road and are going to construct a pipe-line, and that you wish to destroy a certain amount of land under cultivation belonging to us.

This is contrary to your concession, in which your Ambassador (Legation) has arranged, namely, that you have no right whatever to build roads and pipe-lines through fields without satisfying the land-owners. The land at Betwand and Bahaduran belongs to ourselves, therefore we respectfully inform you that without our consent you have no right to build roads and pipe-lines through our fields. Further, we have caused the kaluntars (chiefs) of the two districts named to pledge themselves to us (iltizam) not to permit you any roadway (not to let you through) until you have seen us, satisfied us, and thereafter obtained our permission.

LUTFI ALI.  
MAHOMED JAWOD.

#### Inclosure 3 in No. 249.

*Anglo-Persian Oil Company to Samsam-es-Sultaneh.*

Your Excellency,

Mohammerah, November 19, 1909.

WE beg to hand you enclosed copy of a letter in Persian (undated and unaddressed) which was last week handed to our fields manager at Maidan-i-Naphtun.

You will notice that the letter in question is signed by two persons, whose names are Lutfi Ali and Mahommed Jawod, and that they threaten to put difficulties in the way of the Oil Company if they attempt to construct any roads or lay down any pipe-lines through any land owned by themselves.

As we do not know the two persons above named, we think it better to refer the matter to you rather than to negotiate with them direct.

We do not anticipate that any road or pipe-line which we shall require to construct will have to pass through cultivated land, but in the event of this being necessary we shall of course pay compensation, as per the terms of our agreement with you.

We shall be much obliged, therefore, if you will send instructions to Lutfi Ali and Mahommed Jawod, and also to all your tribesmen, not to interfere in any way with our work, and assure them that if the Oil Company requires the use of any cultivated land adequate compensation will of course be paid to them.

We trust we shall have the opportunity of meeting you during the cold weather and discussing this and other matters of the company with you.

We remain, &c.

LLOYD, SCOTT, AND CO.,  
Managing Agents.

[45597]

No. 250.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 811.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 15, 1909.

I LEARN from a secret source that a Russian subject of the name of Abbas Aga Taverdien obtained a lease of land between the Diz and Karun Rivers some six years ago for irrigation purposes, from the late Nizam-es-Sultanieh, then Governor of Arabistan. The concession extends for about 20 miles northwards from the confluence of the above-mentioned rivers.

Abbas Aga Taverdien is, I hear, now endeavouring to interest Russian capital in the exploitation of this land.

Although further information on this matter would be of great interest in view of our connection with the Sheikh of Mohammerah's irrigation schemes, I refrain from questioning M. Poklewsky, and also from making local enquiries, pending instructions as to how far the nature of our relations with the sheikh may be revealed to my Russian colleague, since inconvenient questions might arise from any enquiries on my part.

The sheikh, I am given to understand, has claims on this land; a fact which, if true, seems largely to effect the question of the form in which our assurances to him should be given (see my despatch No. 207 of the 9th November), but might be brought into conflict with Russian Government by giving our support to his claims.

[45598]

No. 251.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 812.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 15, 1909.

SHIRAZ situation.

His Majesty's consul at Shiraz telegraphs as follows:—

"The Boir Almad, a branch of the Kalgelouis, have for some days held the Bishire road about 30 miles outside Shiraz; all communication is interrupted. Caravans have collected at Bishirjui, and tribesmen threaten to raid them.

"As conditions for the restoration of order Soud-ed-Dowleh at Kazeroon demands that the entire road in Fars should be placed under his control, that he should be given

[1684]

2 T

the governorship of several districts bordering on it, unsubject to Saham-ed-Dowleh. To grant these demands would involve the resignation of Saham and Karguzar, and renewed disturbances among Khamsel tribesmen, to refuse them the probable continuance of disorder on the Isfahan and Bushire roads, which will make it impossible for my Russian colleague to proceed to Bushire, and postpone indefinitely the withdrawal of the detachment.

"There appear to be but two alternatives: the Persian Government might send permanent orders to Soulet to attend at Shiraz and submit to Saham, failing which he will be dismissed; or British troops from Alwaz or Dilam might, after Persian Government has been notified as in piracy case, make a military demonstration in the country of Noir Ahmadi in which possibly Persian troops could co-operate."

I will telegraph further after I have seen M. Poklewsky.

[45716]

No. 252.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 16.)*

(No. 813.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, December 16, 1909.

SHIRAZ situation.

In continuation of my telegram No. 812 of the 15th December, I have the honour to report that M. Poklewsky and I have decided not to renew our representations in favour of coercing Sowlet-ed-Dowleh, in view of the weakness of the Persian Government.

Our action reported in my telegram No. 803 of the 5th December bore no fruit. Persian Government who evidently fear to exasperate Sowlet are endeavouring to temporise with him. Under the circumstances, the course suggested by the two counsels does not fill me with sufficient confidence to allow me to press for its adoption. Our representations on this occasion were therefore confined to bringing the deplorable condition of the Shiraz region to the notice of the Persian Government, and to urging that steps should be taken to remedy it without delay.

[45473]

No. 253.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1359.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 16, 1909.

PROPOSED advance to Persian Government.

Provided that conditions are satisfactory and proper security can be obtained, the Government of India and the Imperial Government are prepared to make a joint advance. This advance would amount to 200,000*l.*, since the Government of India do not wish to exceed that sum.

As regards the facilitation of a joint advance, His Majesty's Government have no recollection of any suggestions made in the past which would be applicable to the present case.

Would it not be possible for the Russian Bank to take over the Russian moiety of the advance?

Please refer to your telegram No. 509 of the 14th December.

[45725]

No. 254.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 17.)*

(No. 654.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, December 13, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report that the following official communiqué respecting the situation at Ardebil is published this morning:—

"Immediately upon the arrival of the first echelon of the Russian column at the Persian town of Ardebil, which was dispatched there for the defence of the Russian consulate and the Russian subjects resident there, the Karadaghis and Shahsevens (who had previous to this taken possession of the above-named town and plundered it)

forthwith left this locality and dispersed to their distant encampments. Since then order has been restored in Ardebil and its environs, and only on the big caravan route connecting the coastal town of Astara with the town of Tabreez are isolated cases of pillaging noticeable.

"Considering, in view of such a position of affairs, that the further presence in Ardebil of a strong detachment is no longer necessary, the Russian Government has decided to recall the greater part of the troops sent there, leaving within the Ardebil district five companies of infantry, a mountain battery, three sotnias of Cossacks, and a section of engineers, in order, by the help of this force, to guard the consulate and Russian subjects against any eventualities, and to establish free movement for the trading caravans along the Astara-Tabreez route. Of the above-named detachments three companies of infantry, the mountain battery, a sotnia of Cossacks, and the section of engineers will be quartered at Ardebil, one squadron of Cossacks and a company of infantry will guard a portion of the above-mentioned route from Astara to Ardebil, and three squadrons of Cossacks and a company of infantry the road from Ardebil to Sarab, from which point up to the town of Tabreez the route will be guarded by portions of the Tabreez detachment.

"As regards the losses incurred by Russian subjects through the pillaging of Ardebil by the nomadic tribes, responsibility for them will be laid on the Shah's Government, which is forming detachments for an expedition against the Karadaghis and the Shahsevens for the purpose of collecting from them the losses referred to. Moreover, the Persian Government has been warned that if its forces do not carry out the task entrusted to them and Russian subjects do not receive the satisfaction due to them, then the Russian Government will itself take coercive measures with reference to these nomads when it shall deem it expedient."

I have, &amp;c.

A. NICOLSON.

[45474]

No. 255.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 499.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 17, 1909.

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

However small the security, it is absolutely necessary that some should be offered.

If the Russian Government will contribute 200,000*l.*, we are prepared to advance the same sum, but at present we cannot give more.

If, however, the Russian Government are equally willing to arrange for a joint advance amounting in all to 400,000*l.*, we are ready to discuss conditions.

Reference is to your telegram No. 809 of the 14th December.

[45465]

No. 256.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 500.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, December 17, 1909.

PROPOSED advance to Persian Government.

Besides conditions on which we are already insisting, the Imperial Bank of Persia suggest demanding (1) the opening of the mint to the coinage of silver; (2) the restoration of the money misappropriated by the mint, amounting to 30,000*l.*; and (3) payment of the interest (due on the loans contracted by the bank and the Government.

Please inform me what you think of the above.

[46342]

No. 257.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 223.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 17, 1909.

THE Russian chargé d'affaires informed me to-day that the Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg had had a conversation with M. Isvolsky which suggested that Turkey might be willing to have the Russo-Persian frontier difficulty settled by

mediation. As a first step, Turkey apparently desired that the Persians should be advised to remain quiet and avoid hostilities and bloodshed. M. Isvolsky was disposed to take this step, but he thought that it should be a condition that the Turks should withdraw immediately from Persian territory, and should promise to withdraw from the disputed zone as soon as normal relations were established. M. Isvolsky wished to know whether I had received any communication of the same kind from the Turks.

I said that nothing had reached me as yet, but when a communication was made to me I would reply in the same manner as that intended by M. Isvolsky.

The chargé d'affaires said that as the Turks had actually occupied Persian territory this was a matter which concerned us both, owing to the agreement of 1907.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[44307]

No. 258.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 17, 1909.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copies of despatches from His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg\* and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,† relative to the question of railway construction in Persia.

As Viscount Morley is aware, the Russian Government have not yet replied to the memorandum on this subject handed to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 14th October, 1908, which was forwarded to your Department in draft form in Mr. Mallet's letter of the 10th October of that year, but in view of the approaching expiration of the Russo-Persian Agreement, whereby railway construction in Persia is barred, and of the progress of the Bagdad line, Sir E. Grey is of opinion that that reply should no longer be awaited and the settlement of the policy to be pursued no further deferred.

Lord Morley will observe that Sir G. Barclay, referring to the Foreign Office memorandum of the 9th October, 1908, agrees with His Majesty's consul-general at Basrah, with whom he has lately conferred, in strongly opposing the construction of the proposed Julfa-Mohammereh line from north to south instead of from both ends simultaneously, and in considering inadmissible the imposition of differential rates on British goods on that portion of the line which will run through the Russian sphere, and that he is accordingly of opinion that the execution of the project should remain in abeyance till satisfaction has been obtained from the Russian Government on these points.

Sir G. Barclay and Major Cox are, however, in favour of earmarking without delay as a matter of general principle this and the other railways which would be of interest to His Majesty's Government, and they suggest, in this connection, that a line running from Basrah to join the proposed Bunder Abbas-Shiraz-Ahwaz line, after passing through Alibad, should be added to those lines which have been already specified.

Sir G. Barclay foresees great difficulty in inducing the Persian Assembly to grant to the two Powers preferential rights in respect of the lines concerned, on account of the strong feeling against Russia now prevailing in Persia, and he accordingly suggests that the grant should be made an indispensable condition of any advance which the two Governments may consent to make to the Persian Government.

Sir E. Grey concurs in the view of Sir G. Barclay and Major Cox as to the mode of construction of the Julfa-Mohammereh line, and as to the undesirability, in the interests of British trade, in admitting the imposition of differential rates on the Russian portion of it, but he considers that, as the settlement of the question is likely to cause difficulty and to give rise to much discussion with the Russian Government, it should be deferred and not allowed to delay the demand to be made on the Persian Government for preferential rights to construct this and other lines.

He also agrees that this demand should be made without delay in order to forestall possible demands of a similar nature by a third Power which, if granted, would react disastrously on British interests both political and commercial, and he approves the addition to the list of lines to be earmarked, proposed by Sir G. Barclay and Major Cox.

Finally, he shares Sir G. Barclay's view that a suitable moment for making the demand would be when the Persian Government apply to the two Powers for an

\* No. 219.

† No. 185.

advance of money which, as Lord Morley is aware from Sir G. Barclay's recent telegrams, there is every prospect of their doing immediately, and he agrees in believing that the mere fact that such a communication has been made would have some effect in discouraging the Persian Government from granting concessions of the kind to a third Power, and possibly other Powers from asking for them.

Turning now to Sir A. Nicholson's despatch, Lord Morley will observe that M. Isvolsky is especially anxious that His Majesty's Government should not refuse to consider the question of joining the Russian and Indian railway systems.

As regards this question, Sir E. Grey fully recognises that, though this junction will doubtless be effected at some future date, the moment is still remote when such an enterprise could be carried into effect. He would, however, submit, for Lord Morley's consideration, that the remoteness of the time when the project can be realised affords no adequate reason for refusing to demand from the Persian Government at once the preferential right to construct the line when it may suit His Majesty's Government to link up the Indian railway system with those of Persia and Europe by a line from Nishki to Kerman, Tehran, and Julfa. Such a demand in no way implies any obligation or intention to begin the construction of the line immediately, while neglect to take this opportunity of making it might be punished by the grant of a similar privilege to a third Power, which might, for example, secure permission to build a line from Tehran to the south, with branches to Seistan and elsewhere. It is clear that the construction in Persia of lines in which Great Britain had no part would be far more detrimental to British interests than their construction with the participation and under the partial control of His Majesty's Government.

There is at the same time no fear that the Russian Government would themselves immediately begin the construction of the line of junction, since, as was admitted in M. Isvolsky's memorandum of the 15th August, 1908, they have no funds available for such a purpose.

An additional reason for pressing this demand is to be found in the obvious anxiety of M. Isvolsky that the question should not be treated as outside the range of practical politics. The concession to his Excellency's wishes involved in admitting it to consideration would, as clearly appears from his Excellency's observations to Sir A. Nicholson, go far to reconcile him and public opinion in Russia generally to British participation in the construction of the Bagdad Railway which is a matter of the highest importance.

It is therefore in Sir E. Grey's opinion essential from a political point of view that this demand should be made without delay, while from a commercial standpoint there would appear to be no objection to the line which, if constructed, would help Indian trade to compete with Russian.

To resume, Sir E. Grey would suggest that, as a first step, the two Powers should, when the Persian Government approaches them with a request for pecuniary assistance, make it a condition of their consent to an advance that the preferential right as against other Powers to construct certain railways should be reserved to them, that these railways should include one from Julfa to Mohammereh by way of Tehran and one connecting the Caucasian Railways with the Indian system by way of Tehran, Kerman, and Nishki, and that His Majesty's Government, for their part, should also demand the right to construct lines from—

1. Bunder Abbas to Kerman;
2. Bunder Abbas to Ahwaz by way of Shiraz with the option of building a port at Khor Musa; and
3. Basrah by way of Alibad to some point on the Bunder Abbas-Shiraz-Ahwaz line.

His Majesty's and the Russian Governments would afterwards discuss at their leisure the details of these schemes and the terms of construction of the lines which would concern them in common.

Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive at Lord Morley's early convenience an expression of his Lordship's views on this important question, and would at the same time suggest that advantages should be taken of Major Cox's presence in London to arrange that a conference should take place between members of this Office and of your Department to discuss the matter with the benefit of his assistance and advice.

I am, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[45942]

No. 259.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 18.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 17, 1909.*

WITH reference to correspondence, ending with your letter of the 16th November, 1909, as to a proposed concession for the improvement of the communications between Bunder Abbas and Kerman, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to enclose copy of a telegram from the Viceroy on the subject.

It will be seen that the Government of India, while in favour of the proposal on its merits, consider that it should only be contemplated if His Majesty's Government are satisfied that it will not induce a corresponding movement on the part of the Russians towards Meshed, or precipitate the construction of the Askabad-Meshed railway.

Viscount Morley, as at present advised, sees no reason to modify the views expressed in the last paragraph of Mr. Campbell's letter of the 28th September, 1908, as to the objections, on political grounds, to the construction of the Askabad-Meshed line; but Sir E. Grey is in the best position to judge how far Russian activity in this direction is likely to be stimulated by the proposals submitted by the Indo-European Telegraph Company, which, Lord Morley observes, are confined for the present to a survey of the country between Bunder Abbas and Kerman.

I am to suggest that a final answer to the company should be deferred pending the receipt of the further communication on the subject of car-marking railway concessions in Persia, which it is understood will be received in due course, in continuation of Mr. Mallet's Secret letter of the 3rd instant.

I am, &c.  
R. RITCHIE.

Inclosure in No. 259.

*Government of India to Viscount Morley.**December 14, 1909.*

(Telegraphic.) P.  
COMMUNICATIONS between Bunder Abbas and Kerman. See your despatch of the 29th October, 1909.

It is very desirable, in our opinion, that communications between the two places, via Minab and Rogun, should be improved. It would, however, be unprofitable to make mere caravan road along this route, and caravans would not use it. Cart road on a railway alignment, which, when required, might be converted into a railway, would be the best arrangement. We consider that telegraph line should follow the road. Right to police road in some form would presumably be included in the concession, if obtained, permission being given to the concessionaires either themselves to raise a limited number of police, or to subsidise local khans.

Government of India held views similar to foregoing in 1904, when they had under consideration whole question of communications in Persia; but we hold now, no less strongly than we did then, that we could only contemplate this proposal, desirable as it undoubtedly is, provided His Majesty's Government are satisfied that a corresponding movement towards Meshed on the part of the Russians will not be the consequence. Please refer to last paragraph of Foreign Office memorandum of the 14th October, 1908, and Russian *aide-memoire* of the 2nd (15th) August, 1908. We consider that it would be expedient to postpone construction of proposed road from Bunder Abbas if it is likely to precipitate construction of line from Askabad to Meshed.

[45931]

No. 260.

*Anglo-Persian Oil Company to Foreign Office.—(Received December 18.)*

Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London,  
December 17, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, communicating to me a telegram received by the India Office in connection with the proposed survey of a part of South-Western Persia.

I know that Mr. Scott was a very able and distinguished officer of the survey

department, but I had hoped to secure the services of a very much younger man. I presume, however, from the fact that the Government of India has suggested our engaging a retired officer, that no suitable officer on the active list is available. In these circumstances I hope you will allow us, before proceeding to consider the engagement of Mr. Scott, to ask whether Mr. G. P. Tate, who knows Persia, and who is, I understand, at the present moment retiring from the Indian Survey, would take on this company's work at once at a salary of 800 rupees per month. He would need to bring with him from India a small establishment whose cost would be defrayed. My company would also pay the travelling expenses of the party to and from the country to be surveyed, and would provide tents and carriage for the party while there. The survey at present required is triangulation only, and, in accordance with the last paragraph of your letter now under reply, we have decided to abandon the idea of a scale of 6 inches to the mile and to adopt a scale of either 1 inch or 2 inches to the mile as may be settled on the spot between our representative in India and Mr. Tate, if we are able to secure Mr. Tate's services. Inasmuch as the cold weather is already well advanced, as the Christmas and New Year holidays in India are imminent, and as it is very important that as much of the triangulation measurements as possible should be completed during this cold weather, I shall esteem it a very great favour if you can cause a telegram to the above effect to be sent to India as quickly as possible.

I am, &c.  
E. W. WALLACE,  
Vice-Chairman.

[45952]

No. 261.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 19.)*

(No. 814.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 19, 1909.*

A GENTLEMAN named Mr. Maurice Blake, son of Sir Henry Blake, whom the Duchess of St. Albans introduced to Sir C. Spring-Rice, has arrived at Tehran. The object of his coming is to try to obtain the rights of the Persian Government in the d'Arcy oil concession which articles 1 and 10 of the said concession accord to it. He is prepared to pay, on behalf of a certain British financier whose name remains undisclosed up to the present, 80,000l. ready money for the acquisition of these rights, and the financier undertakes that the interest he will thus acquire shall remain in British possession.

I have informed Mr. Blake that unless instructions are forthcoming, I can lend him no help.

That the Persian Government should lose its share in a concern which depends so very largely on its interest and goodwill is a thing which, in the interest of the company, is to be deprecated; and moreover, any transaction which would momentarily obliterate the Persian Government's necessity of having recourse to the British and Russian Governments for financial help, I should welcome with very mixed feelings.

But again, in the event of the present applicant failing in this transaction, the Persian Government may well sell their share and interest to a foreigner, and the very eagerness which Mr. Blake has shown may well lead the Persian Government to expect applications in the same sense from elsewhere.

To show favour to one British subject in a transaction, to the detriment of another would presumably arouse objections, but in the present case the political side of the question must not be lost sight of.

In view of the above considerations I am in some doubt as to my attitude, and I request your early instructions as to the course of conduct which I should pursue.

Any moment may see Mr. Blake opening the negotiations.

[45953]

No. 262.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 19.)*

(No. 815.)  
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 19, 1909.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government. Foreign Office telegram No. 500 of the 17th December, 1909.

I am given to understand that the minting contract is about to be settled in a manner satisfactory to the Imperial Bank of Persia. I hope in time to be able to arrange the other points independently of the joint loan, the conditions for which, in so far as the Russian Government will admit, I should like to see restricted to such as are adapted to bring about a speedy strengthening of the Persian Government, whereby the joint interests of the two Powers will, I believe, benefit. With regard to the condition dealing with the earmarking of railways (see my telegram No. 800 of the 2nd December); I think that its importance justifies an exception being made in this case.

In the circumstances, I think the demands of the bank should be omitted. Manager quite acquiesces step, and, indeed, I do not see that the bank has more reason than many other British creditors to look to this Government advance for a settlement of their claims.

[46008]

No. 263.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

(No. 208.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 10, 1909*

With reference to my despatch No. 165 of the 31st August last respecting the repairs to the Godar Bridge on the Ahwaz-Ispahan road, I have the honour to report that I have learned from Messrs. Lynch's Tehran agent that Sardar Milihtash and Sardar Bahalur, on behalf of the Bakhtiari khans who are partners in the road, have agreed to the inspection of the bridge by Messrs. Lynch's engineer at the cost estimated by Messrs. Lynch, viz., 5,738-50 krans.

Mr. Soham, Messrs. Lynch's engineer, has been dispatched to execute this work.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

[46009]

No. 264.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

(No. 211.)

Sir,

*Tehran, November 21, 1909*

AS I had the honour to report in my telegram No. 780 of the 15th instant, the Persian Parliament was officially opened on that day by His Majesty the Shah.

The diplomatic body having received invitations to attend in uniform, I was present at the ceremony with my colleagues and our respective staffs.

His Majesty stood on a raised platform with the Regent on his right and the Valiah on his left, while behind were the clergy, including Seyyid Abdullah, the notorious Murtadhi, who took so prominent a part in the Nationalist movement two years ago and has recently returned from exile.

The proceedings were marked by conspicuous and unusual good order. The Speech from the Throne, of which I have the honour to inclose a translation herewith, was read by the Prime Minister, Sipahdar-i-Aznan, and the Shah having withdrawn, the ceremony ended.

The number of deputies present was just over the necessary quorum of sixty-one, the most prominent of whom are the following:—

Tehran	...	...	Sani-ed-Dowleh.
			Yosun-ed-Dowleh.
			Haji Seyyid Nasrullah.
			Zaka-ul-Mulk.
			Sadiq Hoeset.
			Motamin-ul-Mulk.
			Hussain Kuli Khun, Nawab.
			Prince Assatullah Mirza.
			Wahid-ul-Mulk.
Azerbaijan	...		Taki Zada.
			Hakim-ul-Mulk.
			Mustashar-ed-Dowleh.
			Haji Mirza Reza Khun.

Ispahan	...	...	Mirza Ibrahim Khan.
Astrabad	...	...	Mushir-ed-Dowleh.
Ghilan	...	...	Dr. Immail Khan.
			Moazed-es-Saltaneh.
Irak	...	...	Montaz-ed-Dowleh.
Kazvin	...	...	Fahim-ul-Mulk.
Fars	...	...	Amid-ul-Hokema.

In order to verify the mandates of the deputies, a provisional president, Motamin-ul-Mulk, and two vice-presidents, were elected on the 16th instant. The result of the examination of mandates was the rejection of five candidates, who, it was found, had not been elected strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Law.

On the 20th instant a permanent president and other officials were elected, the result being as follows:—

*President.*—Mustashar-ed-Dowleh.

*First Vice-President.*—Haji Seyyid Nasrullah.

*Second Vice-President.*—Montaz-ed-Dowleh.

The new president was a very prominent member of the first Medjliss and is a Tabreez deputy. He was arrested by order of Mohammmad Ali, the ex-Shah, on the occasion of the *coup d'Etat* of June 1908 and only released a year later. He is possessed of considerable influence among the Nationalists, and, so far as can be judged, is imbued with moderate views and is not likely to allow the Medjliss to embark on a policy of sweeping changes, which is supposed to be advocated by the more violent section of the party led by Taki Zada, of which Hussain Kuli Khun, Nawab, is a prominent adherent. It is therefore hoped that, for the present at any rate, the conflict between the Assembly and the military leaders, Sardar Assad and Sipahdar, will be averted, and that a vote of confidence in the Cabinet will be given.

So far, it will be observed, the Assembly has been occupied in dealing with formalities relating to its own internal affairs, and beyond the reading of a few congratulatory telegrams—including messages from the President of the United States and the French President, from the Austrian, Belgian, and French Governments, and communicating telegrams from Astara respecting the situation at Ardabil—no public business has yet been transacted.

It is as yet too early to pronounce on the merits of the new Medjliss, but it can, at any rate, be said, with a certain amount of confidence, that it promises to be less inefficient than its predecessor.

A feature, as far as one can judge from the deputies who have so far arrived at the capital, is the eclipse of Clericalism. In the first Medjliss, under the system of class election, the clerical element was preponderant, but this has apparently now been reversed.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 264.

*Speech of Shah from the Throne at the Opening of Parliament, November 15, 1909.*

(Translation.)

IN the name of God, the bestower of freedom, and by the hidden support of the twelfth Imam, the National Assembly is opened with glory and good fortune.

Persia, for centuries, and particularly in later times, had remained silent and tranquil, but at last, in view of advancement of thought and intelligence, the people entered the phase of agitation, and in the course of three years the crisis was reached, after having gone through the first stages which all nations must traverse for their improvement. God be praised that the end was fortunate, and we to-day see with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction the opening of our first Parliament in the present reign, brought about by the untiring energy of the people themselves and the sympathy and help of Persia's well-wishers.

We hope that our deputies will continue to show that energy and devotion which have brought about this happiness and that they will carry out their sacred duties with full care and mindfulness. My Government also will do their utmost to maintain security

and order in the realm and to foster its progress. I am also very pleased that the new Government, which aims at progress, is appreciated by the people and has brought about security and peace to all. Minor disturbances, which have occurred in certain parts owing to the action of certain rebels who are in fear on account of their misdeeds, are being dealt with by my Government and there is every hope of their speedy cessation.

We are exceedingly happy that our friendly relations with foreign Powers are maintained and are also very pleased to see their sympathy towards the progress of the new order of things, and we hope for the permanence of these sentiments in the future.

We sincerely trust that, in view of the friendly discussions which are in progress, and of the good results which are apparent therefrom, the sorrow and sadness which is dominant in the minds of the public owing to the presence of foreign troops in Persian territory, will shortly be removed.

In order to begin reforms and to organise the Government, the deputies and Ministers must first give their greatest attention to the work of gradually reforming the various departments on the model of those of civilised Powers, and particularly to the urgent work of reform in the finances of the State, of improvement in the police administration and the protection and security of the high roads. They will work in accordance with a detailed programme which my Cabinet will present to them for the immediate and urgent reforms necessary, and they will do this with the utmost possible expedition; and our sincerest desire and the wish of the people, which is that the necessary measures for the happiness of the nation and the strengthening of the constitution, which is in accordance with the soul of Islam, will be carried out.

We pray to God for the success of the people's deputies and hope for the increase of glory, independence, and happiness of the people.

[46010]

No. 265.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey. (Received December 20.)*

(No. 212.)

Sir,

Tehran, November 29, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez respecting the recent movement of rebellious tribes at Ardebil and the rumours which have been current regarding the action of the Russian authorities.

I have, &amp;c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 265.

*Acting Consul-General Stuart to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 35.)

Sir,

Tabreez, November 14, 1909.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 194 of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to enclose herewith translations of the two telegrams sent by Rahim Khan and the Karadagh and Shahsevan chiefs to my Russian colleague for transmission respectively to the ex-Shah and to the two Bakhtiari chiefs Amir Mulkham and Sardar-i-Jang.

As I have already reported fully by telegraph, I will not trouble you with a repetition of the events which led up to the capture and sack of Ardebil by the rebels. On the arrival of the Russian troops, the rebels put up a certain Ghaffar Khan as governor and retired outside the town to the camp, formerly prepared by Sattar Khan. The Shahsevens are now negotiating with Reshid-ul-Mulk, and perhaps the display of force made by the governor-general and the approach of winter may conduce to effect an agreement.

At Sarab, where Sanad Khan and Bagher Khan now are, there appear to be about 3,000 men under the supreme command of Reshid-ul-Mulk. A detachment is at Astara and another detachment has fortified the Resht road in Chahkhal. This last detachment has already had a skirmish with the Shahsevens, whom they are reported to have repulsed with bombs in the time-honoured revolutionary manner. If peace is made and the rebels retire, Reshid-ul-Mulk will proceed as governor to Ardebil.

In the opinion of almost every Persian and unoffical European here, the rebels were instigated by the Russians. As is usual in such cases, no definite proof is

forthcoming to support the accusation, which may be unfounded. It must, however, be confessed that the Russians have been imprudent or unfortunate in coincidences. Until September Zerghim and other Karadagh chiefs, with whom the local authorities had been in negotiation, had shown a disposition to co-operate with the Government against Rahim Khan. After the Russian expedition to Karadagh they made a complete volte-face, and threw in their lot with Rahim Khan. To make the coincidence still more unfortunate, the Russians attacked and apparently killed Ali Khan, who happened to be the most dangerous opponent of Rahim Khan among the Karadagh chiefs. Moreover, Mr. Miller himself afterwards confessed that the charges of pillage, &c., made by the Moshapari villagers against Ali Khan were for the most part untrue. At the time of the expedition, I pointed out to Mr. Miller, as reported in my telegram No. 182 of the 21st August last, that native suspicions would inevitably be aroused. During all this time Mr. Miller was in continuous correspondence with Rahim Khan, an avowed rebel against the established authorities. Of course this correspondence may have merely consisted in an exchange of courtesies between the local representative of the Russian Government and the savage outlaw, whose cruelty and extortions have rendered him an object of general hatred. Still, the mistrust of the local authorities, who were fully aware of this correspondence, is perhaps not surprising. Again, after Rahim Khan and his allies had openly proclaimed their intention of revolt against the new régime, Mr. Miller very unwisely sent his consulate doctor to Ahar to treat Rahim Khan for paralysis of the face. Two days after the departure of the doctor from Ahar Rahim Khan marched on Ardebil.

In any case, it is difficult to believe that the Russians, as Mr. Miller assured me, used their influence to restrain Rahim Khan. However, with or without encouragement from outside, I think that this revolt was inevitable, although perhaps Rahim Khan, but for the general impression that the Russians were behind him, would not have been able to win over the other khans of Karadagh. As regards the Shahsevens, Sattar Khan and the Anjuman at Ardebil are mainly responsible for their revolt. Some of the Shahsevan chiefs came into Ardebil, and made submission to the new régime. Sattar, in one of his frequent periods of drunkenness, grossly insulted the chiefs, who of course would not brook such treatment from a man whom they despise as a plebeian. Moreover, Sattar and the Anjuman plotted to imprison the chiefs, in spite of their safe-conduct, in order to recover the merchandises robbed during the last six months by the Shahsevens. The chiefs, irritated and alarmed, finally left the city, and threw in their lot with Rahim Khan.

Sattar Khan began well at Ardebil by suppressing the fedais (many of whom out of revenge joined the Shahsevens), but his drunkenness finally brought him to grief. He appears to have escaped from Ardebil through the connivance of one of the Shahsevan chiefs. He has been thoroughly discredited by his conduct there, and is now on very bad terms with the local authorities and Bagher Khan, whom he accuses of having tried to get him into a death-trap at Ardebil. Even among the revolutionary elements there is now a party desirous of getting rid of Sattar. The governor-general confessed to me that Sattar is quite impossible. When sober, he is not without sympathetic qualities, but his drunkenness, which has become more frequent, renders him quite unreliable. Mukhber-es-Saltaneh wishes to send him to Tehran. If Sattar refuses to go, the governor-general will have to use force, in which event there might be a fight, involving the danger of an intervention of the Russian troops. In view of the popular bitterness against Russia since the outbreak of the rebellion in Eastern Azerbaijan, such intervention would greatly weaken the governor's credit. It is the fear of such complications which deters Mukhber-es-Saltaneh from proceeding at once against Sattar. Moreover, Muhammad Khun Amir Toosani, commander of the Persian Cossacks, is of the opinion that the troops at the governor's disposal are not sufficient to enable a *coup de main* against Sattar. He says that the Russian horsemen are absolutely useless, so that, at the present moment, the governor can only rely on his 100 Cossacks.

The Persian Government must make a big effort if they wish to save Azerbaijan. After three months' long delay, 200 Cossacks and 200 useless Iranian horsemen struggle into Tabreez. It is hopeless to expect the governor-general to govern the most turbulent province of Persia with such a force. Azerbaijan contains probably the best fighting tribesmen of Persia, and its security is also endangered by the fedais, who exist here in greater numbers than anywhere else. Besides these two dangers, there is always a certain amount of unrest caused by Turkish and Russian influences. Under such circumstances the problem before the governor of Azerbaijan is probably more difficult than that confronting any other provincial governor. The severity of the Azerbaijan winter may keep the unruly elements quiet for the next few months; but

unless an efficient force, sent from outside and containing no fakhs, is organised, during this breathing space, the spring may witness a general outbreak of disorders throughout the province.

I have, &c.  
W. A. SMART.

Inclosure 2 in No. 265.

*Telegram addressed to ex-Shah (vid the Russian Consul-General) by Rahim Khan and various Chiefs.*

FOR some time these constitutionalists have created disorders, murdered and plundered. Firstly, how many of the notables and seyids of Tabreez have they not killed and plundered their houses! Also at Ardabil they have killed several notables and seyids, and carried off all their property. And in Tehran they have killed several notables and mujtehdids, who are the representatives of the Imam. Having united with Georgians and Armenians, they have killed our ulama and seyids in their eyes! Their whole thought is to ruin us and to annihilate the Mahomedan religion and our honour. Therefore, more than 2,000,000 people, and all the khans of Karadagh, and all the begzadehs and chiefs of the Kijubeghi, and the kathodns of the Shahsevan tribe, have unanimously agreed to start for Ardabil on the 14th of Ramazan, and as long as we live we will not allow any one to mention anywhere the word "constitution." We do not grudge any service for your Majesty, and we offer our lives and property as a sacrifice to your Majesty.

The above is for the information of your Imperial Majesty.

(Signatures of Rahim Khan and nine Karadagh  
and Shahsevan Chiefs.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 265.

*Telegram addressed to Amir Afakham and Sedar-i-Jang (vid the Russian Consul-General) by Rahim Khan and various Chiefs.*

FOR some time past these Constitutionalists have created disorders, murdered, and plundered. How many ulama and seyids of Tabreez and other places have they not killed. From the beginning their intention has not been constitutionalism, but rather the destruction of the religion of Mahomet. Therefore, all the khans and chiefs of Karadagh, and the khans, begzadehs, and kathodns of the Shahsevan, having assembled, have agreed to start for Ardabil on the 14th of Ramazan, in order to destroy the constitutionalists there. Hence we will march on Tehran, having marched straight there, as long as we have life, we will not allow the name of constitutionalism to exist in Persia.

The above is for your information.

(Signatures of Rahim Khan and nine Karadagh  
and Shahsevan Chiefs.)

[46011]

No. 266.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

(No. 213.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, November 30, 1909.*

IN my despatch No. 201 of the 30th ultimo I reported that it was generally believed that when the Medjliss met a determined attack would be made on the Ministry by the advanced Nationalists. That this opinion has not proved correct is due to the counsels of moderation of Nasr-ul-Mulk, who since his return has used all his powerful influence to persuade the advanced Nationalists not to upset the present Cabinet. He tells me that on his arrival he was urged to accept the post of Regent, but that he had refused in the conviction that he could do more useful work for the moment if he held no office and confined himself to giving disinterested advice. He has urged on the advanced Nationalists the services rendered to the constitutional cause by

Sipahdar and Sardar Assad, Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, the two members of the Cabinet against whom complaints were especially directed, and has most strongly deprecated any attack on them at this moment. His counsels have proved so far. The two Ministers had, on the meeting of the Medjliss, tendered their resignation. The Regent refused to accept it, and his action has now received the express approval of the Assembly. Azad-ul-Mulk has also been confirmed in his post as Regent, so that the provisional administration has received what is tantamount to a vote of confidence.

No progress has been made in the negotiations between the two banks and the Government for the joint advance of 400,000 toman against the Crown jewels, no reply having yet been returned by the Persian Government to the proposals of the two banks.

It would not be perhaps entirely a matter for regret if these negotiations came to nothing, for doles of this kind merely enable the Government to continue a hand-to-mouth existence. Now that the Medjliss has met, the sooner it pockets its pride and authorises the Government to apply to the two legations for a substantial advance the better it will be in Persia's interest. Indeed, it is, I think, very unfortunate that the Persian Government should during the past four months have shirked the responsibility of taking this step by themselves. Much precious time has been wasted. The negotiations which must ensue before an advance can be made must occupy a considerable time, and the position to-day would be more hopeful if these negotiations were well advanced. Fortunately for the new Government there has been relative tranquillity in the country since shortly after the revolution, but there are not wanting signs that this will prove to have been merely a temporary lull. The main southern route—the Bushire-Ispahan road—is again reported practically closed, the section between Shiraz and Kazerun, on which the Russian consul-general at Bushire was recently attacked, and the stages immediately south of Ispahan, where the road is completely blocked by the Kuleghins, being especially disturbed. Disturbances are again threatening at Shiraz, where the governor-general, able man though he is, is finding great difficulty in maintaining his authority with the small force at his disposal. His Majesty's acting consul regards the situation in Fars as critical, and urges that the governor should receive strong support from Tehran, adding that, should Saham-ed-Dowleh fail, the province would fall into chaos from which the only exit would be intervention. Tribal conflicts, for which the Kullurs appear to be responsible, are reported from the neighbourhood of Kerumshah. From Kerum now comes that the Narmashir district is threatened with raids from Baluchis. At Zenjan, where trouble has been brewing for some time, fomented by a reactionary mullah, there has been fighting between the mullah's following and the Government troops, who were on their way to Ardabil. Fortunately the latter were entirely successful, the mullah and his leading supporters being captured, but notwithstanding this success, and despite the deliverance of Ardabil by the arrival of Russian troops, the general situation is, I think, decidedly less hopeful than four weeks ago. Unfortunately the Cabinet's programme for submission to the Medjliss, which is believed to contain a proposal to apply to the two Governments for a loan, has not yet been placed before the Assembly. Every day which passes without some really substantial financial assistance to the Government is likely to bring us nearer to a state of things where the intervention of the two Powers on a large scale may be inevitable.

The most crying needs for the present are the institution of an efficient gendarmerie and the reorganisation of the financial administration. Both are essential before the revenue can again be properly collected and can be properly used, and it is probable that neither will be practicable without a liberal introduction of the foreign element. The two Governments will no doubt wish to make this condition a *sine qua non* of any Anglo-Russian financial assistance, though, having regard to the probable consequences of a continuance of Persia's present hand-to-mouth administration, I am not sure that, in the event of such a demand proving an insuperable obstacle to an advance, the two Governments would not find it better economy in the end to waive it, giving the Persian Government money and letting them do the best they can with it themselves. They would probably fail to effect any permanent improvement in the administration, but there would be an offset of success which it might be worth taking sooner than leave the Government without funds. Nasr-ul-Mulk seems to realise that the co-operation of Europeans is needed, but I have no certainty as to the feeling of the Medjliss, which has not yet shown its hand. Probably it would be willing to invite French assistance for the financial administration, but the gendarmerie is the great difficulty. The Russian Government has made it known that it is opposed to the employ-

ment of foreign officers of any nationality not approved by it, and I gather from my Russian colleague that, except for the districts where we have special interests, his Government is not inclined to allow the employment of any military officers but Russians. This would be a pill which I fear the Persian Government might find impossible to swallow, and it was because of this, and in order to give Russia less handle for demanding the employment of her officers in the north, that in our scheme for the protection of the main southern route Major Cox and I recommended the employment of British civilians rather than military officers. It is more than possible that the Persian Government could be brought to employ foreign officers in any gentlemanly force that may be instituted, but if Russia insists on these being Russians, and this is made one of the conditions of an advance, I should have little hope of the Persian Government's accepting Anglo-Russian financial help. It would, I think, prefer, if it can get help from no other quarter, to attempt to carry on in the present limit-to-mouth fashion, which can only lead sooner or later to a state of things admitting of no solution but intervention on a large scale.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

[46012]

No. 267.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

(No. 214.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, December 3, 1909.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 794 of the 29th November, I have the honour to transmit copy of an interesting despatch from His Majesty's acting consul at Shiraz, which has reached me too late to be embodied in the monthly summary, and indeed from its importance seems to call for a separate cover.

I have read parts of this despatch to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I have urged both upon his Highness and upon the Minister of the Interior the necessity of giving all possible support to Saham-ed-Dowleh, the capable Governor-General of Fars. In its present almost penniless condition it seems doubtful whether the Government will be able to give him adequate support, but they are sending him a regiment and have promised to authorise him to raise local levies.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Inlosure in No. 267.

*Summary of Events in Shiraz for week ending November 17, 1909.*

THE question of the future of Fars has now come to a head. Repeated road robberies on both sides of Shiraz, with constant local intrigue against him, have convinced the governor that without more force he is helpless, and had better resign while he has still some prestige left. It appears that he has for some time been coming to this conclusion, but the matter was brought to a head by a violent quarrel between him and Sheikh-ul-Mulk, the newly arrived head of the judicial department. It appears that he sent for Sheikh-ul-Mulk on business, and that the latter refused to come, saying he was the governor's equal, and violently abusing one of the governor's messengers. Eventually he went to see Saham-ed-Dowleh, and claimed independence of the executive and equality of himself with the governor. The latter indignantly denying this, they had a sharp quarrel, and Sheikh-ul-Mulk left the palace in a towering passion, declaring publicly that he cared for nobody. The governor then telegraphed to Tehran that either he or Sheikh-ul-Mulk must leave Shiraz at once. Sheikh-ul-Mulk subsequently apologised, but the governor refused, saying the matter was in the hands of the Tehran authorities. An inexpressible delay ensued, the governor remaining more than forty-eight hours without an answer, which still further depressed him. On the 17th he telegraphed that, apart from the Sheikh-ul-Mulk affair, he could not consent to remain in office unless the central Government would either provide him with troops or allow him to devote the whole revenue of Fars to enlisting troops himself.

The whole future of Fars, and indeed of Southern Persia, is at stake on this question. It is quite impossible to hope for greater, or indeed the same, success in maintaining order for my successor of Saham-ed-Dowleh, and if he resigns there is a prospect of continued and hopeless disorder, the end of which it is impossible to

foresee. On the other hand, it seems unlikely that the necessitous Persian Government will agree to hand over the revenues of Fars for the exclusive use of the Fars Government. The juncture is one of extreme interest. In the case of most Persians, some compromise would be arrived at to save the face of all parties, but Saham-ed-Dowleh is not an ordinary Persian, and it does not seem likely that he will content himself with less than his full demands. As Mavvakkar-ed-Dowleh pitifully put it: "It is impossible to continue this show with an empty hand."

A finished force took place on the 15th, when the opening of the Medjlis was celebrated by fireworks, at which the British and Russian consuls attended. The newly elected members of the Medjlis-i-Ayvatl were received by the governor-general with extreme politeness, and a speech was read celebrating the absolute unity of all classes in Persia, and ending with acclamations for the Parliament, the law ("kanun") and the Shariat. Considering that the majority of those present on the platform are well known to be engaged in active intrigues against the governor, the effect of the whole gathering was rather bitterly humorous.

The departure of the detachment, which had been fixed for the 14th, was delayed in view of the precarious position of the governor. On the 15th His Majesty's consul replied to a request for an interview from Haji Ali Agha, a member of the Medjlis-i-Ayvatl, and one of the leaders of the cabal against the governor, that he was sorry that he could not fix any time, as he was intending to leave for Bushire as soon as he could be satisfied that the province was safe in the strong hands of Saham-ed-Dowleh and that the intrigues against him had been unsuccessful.

Solcet-ed-Dowleh has gone past Chenar Rahdar without paying any British claims according to his promise. He has sent lavish promises, and declares that he is investigating the various claims. It is to be feared that nothing is to be hoped from him. His object seems to be to avoid all acts of severity within the tribe in order to be sure of their support in the event of the governor's failure to maintain his position. In any case he has lost all claims to be considered a friend of Great Britain.

The roads are going from bad to worse. The post from Bushire was robbed near Kazerun, two parcels belonging to His Majesty's consul being carried off, apparently by Kashgais.

The post from Tehran was robbed near Yezdikhist, and a caravan of seventy mules, accompanied by Arabab Rustam, was carried off near Khaneh Kirghan. The Arabab came on almost alone.

On the 16th a similar robbery was reported from the Sineh Safid pass, near Dastarjin, the robbers in both cases being Kulgeh; but it is inconceivable they acted without Kashgai connivance.

Mr. Livingstone's claim for burglary (*vide* Shiraz news for the 12th May, 1909) was paid by Ata-ed-Dowleh, the then begler beggi, after the governor had had Cesnaeks sitting in his house for more than twenty-four hours.

M. Passok, Russian consul-general, arrived on the 15th. Mansur-es-Saltanchi, Arab, has been appointed Governor of Dashti and Dashtistan. He was to have accompanied Mr. Bill as far as Borazjin, but his departure is now dependent, like everything else, on the fate of the governor.

Maximum temperature in sun = 103 degrees on the 14th instant.

Maximum temperature in shade = 88 degrees on the 14th instant.

Minimum temperature at 5 A.M. = 34 degrees on the 15th and 16th instant.

J. H. BILL,

*His Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul, Shiraz.*

[46014]

No. 268.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

(No. 216.)  
Sir,

*Tehran, December 3, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia for the past four weeks.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.



## No. 12.—Monthly Summary of Events in Persia for four weeks ending December 3, 1909.

## Tehran.

THE King's birthday was celebrated in the usual manner on the 9th instant, when representatives of His Majesty the Shah and the Foreign Office bearing congratulatory messages were received by His Majesty's Minister, who in the evening gave a dinner to the Cabinet Ministers and principal members of the English colony.

2. The ex-Prime Minister, Mushir-es-Sultanh, and others who were in "bast" at the Turkish Embassy have left their place of refuge and have paid varying sums to the Government, by which means they have apparently avoided molestation for their past reactionary activity.

3. Hajji Mohammed Ismail, the ex-mint master, who was guilty of defalcations in connection with his mint contract with the Imperial Bank to the extent of 30,000*l*., still enjoys the hospitality of the Russian Legation, and no progress is being made towards a settlement of his affairs. The same remarks apply to the case of the ex-Shah's uncle, Kamran Mirza (Nah-es-Sultanh), who similarly enjoys Russian protection, and is being prosecuted by the Persian Government on a charge of having misappropriated Crown jewels—a charge which has every appearance of being well founded. These are two of the most flagrant cases of the grant of Russian protection to Persian subjects—a crying abuse which it is to be hoped will cease now that M. Poklewsky has succeeded M. Hartwig.

4. *The Press*.—The newspapers continue to publish daily articles directed against Russia and to protest against the continued presence of Russian troops in Persian territory. One of these journals lately reproduced a photograph showing the notorious rebel Rahim Khan handcuffed in the Russian vice-consul at Ardabil. This was of course intended to prove to the public that Rahim Khan's activity at Ardabil was commencing, if not actually encouraged, by the Russian Government, an opinion which is generally held here.

5. Captain Petzel, attaché to the German Legation, died on the 25th instant, after a very short illness, from small-pox.

6. Colonel Prince Vdolsky, Chief of the Staff of the cavalry division of the Caucasus, arrived at Tehran on the 23rd instant to take command of the Persian Cossack Brigade in succession to Colonel Likhoff.

7. *The National Assembly*.—As reported in a separate despatch (No. 211) the Medjliss was officially opened by the Shah on the 15th November. The corps diplomatique attended the ceremony in uniform. The speech from the throne was read by Sipahdar-i-Azam, the Minister of War.

The first three days were occupied in verifying the mandates of the deputies under the provisional presidency of Motammas-ul-Mulk. On the 20th November Mostafar-ed-Dowleh was elected president, while Hajji Seyyid Nasrullah and Montaz-ed-Dowleh were chosen as vice-presidents. On the 22nd the deputies took the oath prescribed by the constitution, and on the following day Azad-ul-Mulk was confirmed as regent by a vote of the majority. On the 24th the sitting was devoted to the expression of gratitude on the part of the Persian people for all that has been done in the cause of their freedom by their well-wishers, including Lord Launington, Professor E. Browne, and Mr. H. B. Lynch, M.P., of whose sympathy and support Yaki Zadeh spoke in the highest terms. Various messages of congratulation were also read from all parts of the country and from abroad, including congratulatory messages from the French, Belgian, and Austrian Governments.

On the 25th the Regent, Azad-ul-Mulk, took the oath of allegiance to the constitution at a special sitting of the Medjliss in the presence of the principal mujtaheds, including Seyyid Abdullah, who had lately returned from exile.

The Regent informed the House of the resignation of Sipahdar and Sardar Assad from their offices of Ministers of War and the Interior respectively, but added that he had refused to accept their withdrawal. Their letters to the Regent, formally resigning their offices, were then read and the President proposed that the House should confirm the Regent's decision not to accept the resignations of the two elders, and the proposal was unanimously agreed to without a division.

On the 30th November, the Cabinet having in the mean time been reconstructed,

the following Ministers were presented to the House by the Premier, Sipahdar-i-Azam:—

Sardar Assad	...	...	Minister of the Interior.
Ala-es-Sultanh	...	...	Minister of Foreign Affairs.
Mushir-ed-Dowleh	...	...	Minister of Justice.
Vosouk-ed-Dowleh	...	...	Minister of Finance.
Sani-ed-Dowleh	...	...	Minister of Education.
Sardar Mansour	...	...	Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

The War Office remains under Sipahdar-i-Azam.

Vosouk-ed-Dowleh then read the programme of the Cabinet, of which the following are the principal features.

1. Reform of the army, police, and road guards.
2. An immediate advance of 500,000*l*., and the consolidation of the present floating debt.
3. Financial reform and appointment of inspectors and a central Treasury.
4. Engagement of foreign advisers and reorganisation of all Government departments.

G. P. CHURCHILL

## Tabreez.

1. No incident of importance has occurred at Tabreez itself during the past four weeks, but the governor-general has found himself somewhat hampered by Sattar Khan, who returned to Tabreez early in November from Ardabil. His mismanagement of the negotiations with the Shabsavans and his subsequent flight from Ardabil have entirely discredited him. The governor-general does not at present feel strong enough to compel Sattar Khan to go to Tehran, but as soon as he receives reinforcements from Tehran he proposes to do this. The Russian consul-general appears to have thought that the governor-general intended to employ force against Sattar Khan at once, for on the 10th November he asked Mr. Smart what his attitude would be if the Russian troops, whose instructions were to stop fighting in the streets, intervened on the side of the governor-general and the national hero were accidentally killed. Mr. Smart deprecated such interference as likely to cause complications such as the taking of refuge at the Turkish consulate-general. M. Miller asked for instructions and was told that the troops must act according to their orders. He also received a telegram from M. Isovsky telling him to let it be known that fighting would not be allowed and informing him that more troops could be sent if required.

2. One officer and forty-two Russian Cossacks were on the 2nd November sent to Sarab as the Russian consular agent at that place reported that it was threatened by rebels. Thirty of the detachment were to return if the officer considered twelve sufficient to protect the few Russians at Sarab.

## Ardabil.

1. At the beginning of November Sattar Khan, who had been surrounded in Ardabil by Rahim Khan with Karadaghis and Shabsavans, escaped with a few men to Sarab. The Russian vice-consul at Ardabil telegraphed to the Russian consul-general at Tabreez that the town was on the point of falling, that the Government forces had no more ammunition and had begged him to bring in Russian troops, that he could not be responsible for the safety of Russian subjects, and that he feared an attack on the vice-consulate by the terrified mob. On the 5th November His Majesty's acting consul-general at Tabreez reported that Ardabil had been taken and plundered; the local authorities and some others had taken refuge in the Russian vice-consulate, and the rebels were demanding their surrender. The Russian vice-consul asked for immediate help. The Russian Government had meanwhile determined to reinforce their consular guard at Ardabil, and were discussing the question of sending a considerable force. His Majesty's Minister at Tehran urged his Russian colleague to discourage the dispatch of a large force, but M. Poklewsky preferred to let his Government decide the question without his advice. By the 11th November a Russian battalion was on its way to Ardabil from Astara with orders to keep the road open and to take action against emissaries carrying loot and against depôts of loot. A regiment

was also at Astara ready to move if required. On the 16th November Russian officials at Tabreez stated that at least two battalions and 200 Cossacks had arrived at Ardebil. On the 17th November the Russian vice-consul reported that after two days negotiations, Rahim Khan and his men had evacuated Ardebil, a religious service of thanksgiving for deliverance had been held at which Armenian priests and Moslem mullahs officiated, and later the Russian troops had been reviewed. By the 24th November the Russian force at Ardebil had reached a strength of 3,200, the regiment from Astara having been moved to Ardebil. On the 27th November Mr. Smart reported that Rahim Khan had gone to Karadagh, and the Shahsevens to Moghan, their winter quarters. M. Miller now suggested the placing of Russian garrisons at Aluar, Meshepar, and Moghan, and of detachments on the Astara-Ardebil and Ardebil-Tabreez roads. M. Poklewsky advised his Government against this as looking too much like a general occupation, and suggested that the troops might punish the Shahsevens, but leave Rahim Khan to be dealt with by the Persian Government. On the 30th November M. Poklewsky announced that it had been decided to withdraw the greater part of the troops from Ardebil. Reshid-ul-Mulk had meanwhile reached Ardebil and assumed the governorship, and some Government troops had also arrived there. The fact that the Russian vice-consul at Ardebil entered into negotiations with Rahim Khan when in open revolt against the Persian Government has caused much adverse comment in the Tehran press, which also states that the rebels have been allowed to convey several caravans loaded of looted property into Russian territory. Much feeling has also been aroused by the publication by the Russian vice-consul of a proclamation which, according to Persians, amounts to a declaration that he has taken over the administration of Ardebil. It appears that Rahim Khan called on the Russian vice-consul, expressed his fidelity to Russia, and suggested that Russia should occupy all districts where she then had troops.

#### *Zinjan.*

A force of Government troops under Yefraim and Sardar Bahadur arrived from Tehran on the 16th November on their way to Ardebil, but finding Mullah Kurban Ali and others still in revolt against the Government they attacked them. Some fighting occurred, but the rebels were soon scattered, and by the end of November all the leaders had been captured and order restored. On the 1st December the force was still at Zinjan.

#### *Kazvin.*

Though early in November M. Isvolsky stated that events at Ardebil would not affect the withdrawal of Russian troops from Kazvin, no troops had, on the 1st December, left Persia. On the 25th November M. Isvolsky stated that 300 were about to be withdrawn.

#### *Resht.*

The town and district have remained quiet. Amid-us-Sultan, with 250 Government troops, left on the 2nd November for Ardebil.

#### *Meshed.*

1. It is reported that supplies for the winter have been laid in for the Russian garrison, as at present constituted. There is also a rumour that barracks are to be built outside the city.

2. The Russian authorities are encouraging Afghan pilgrims, and have issued notices pointing out that the journey via their railway costs much less than that via India.

3. The collection of the revenue has been begun, and at the end of October 16,000*l.* were remitted to Tehran.

4. Major Sykes returned to Meshed on the 28th October, and left again on tour on the 5th November.

#### *Turbat-i-Haidari.*

1. Lieutenants Markarov and Ivantchenko left on the 13th October for Karez. They were travelling to Sarakhs via Pul-i-khatun. They rode hired donkeys, and M. Ivantchenko was in Arab dress.

#### 2. The following moves of Russian Cossacks are reported :—

On the 17th October four arrived from Birjand on their way to Russia; on the 20th six from Birjand on their way to Russia; on the 19th two from Meshed for Karez; on the 23rd ten from Meshed for Seistan; on the 31st six from Karez for Kerman; on the 1st November twenty-five from Seistan for Russia.

3. His Majesty's consul was on tour from the 17th October until the 31st, during which time he visited Karez and Turbat-i-Sheikh Jam.

#### *Seistan.*

1. His Majesty's consul arrived at Seistan on the 12th November.

2. During September 3,131 cases were treated, and sixty-seven operations performed in the consular hospital.

#### *Ispahan.*

1. Samsam-es-Sultaneh retains the governorship, and the town remains fairly quiet. The Tehran road continues undisturbed, and the Yazd road has practically been so, though one caravan was plundered. Persian reports describe the Sultanabad road as quite unsafe. The Shiraz road near Yazdikhaat has remained in the hands of some 300 Kugheluis tribesmen, who have plundered several caravans and posts. The Persian Cossacks on their way to Shiraz managed to get through during the temporary absence of the tribesmen. Insurance companies refuse to insure caravans using the Shiraz road, and the rate of transport is double that of last year. The Governor General of Ispahan refuses to guarantee the safety of a specie caravan in his district. There was a temporary improvement, but about the 20th November a serious robbery was committed by Kugheluis at Orchini, within 10 miles of Ispahan, on the Shiraz road, when the post was entirely looted, and a caravan of 300 animals carried off. The robbers are reported to be holding a position commanding the road and barring traffic.

#### *Yezd.*

The new governor has maintained order, punished many offenders, and dispatched a force to deal with the Ta'ri roughs. Many of the latter are now in hiding. On the whole, Yezd is a more peaceful spot than it has been for a long time. The roads are much safer, but one post was robbed near No-Gumbaz early in the month.

#### *Sultanabad.*

The outlook in Iraq is, according to Mr. Vice-Consul Strauss, very unsatisfactory. The conduct of the new Governor, Muntassir-ed-Dowleh, and local feuds seem likely to aggravate the disorder and distress already prevalent in the district. A leading priest took refuge in the vice-consulate, availing that the governor sought to kill him, but was eventually persuaded to leave. Many of the wealthier inhabitants of the town have left, or are leaving for Kerbela and other places.

#### *Kermanshah.*

1. Um-ul-Khakan, mother of the ex-Shah, died at Kasr-i-Shirin on the 1st November on her way to Kerbela.

2. About the 8th November a fight took place between Daoud Khan, supported by most of the tribes in the Kermanshah district, and the Sinjabis, allied with the Jafis of Kurdistan and the Ahmedvand Chelabis (Turkish refugees). The governor received orders to support Daoud Khan, but as a party in Kermanshah was opposed to further fighting as likely to lead to a religious war, the Jafis being Sunnis, he delayed some days before sending troops. When the troops were sent the Sinjabis retired, as they did not wish to fight Government troops. Daoud Khan thereupon plundered several villages. The roads are unsafe and the country around Hamdan is reported disturbed and traffic practically stopped.

3. Some alarm was caused in November by a number of Russian subjects purchasing large quantities of fodder for horses.

## Kerman.

1. The town and district have remained quiet thanks to the strong measures taken by the governor.

2. A telegram dated the 29th November from Kerman stated that the Sarhad Baluchis were gathering apparently with the intention of raiding the Narmashir district. His Majesty's Minister having urged the Persian Government to take steps to prevent this, troops are being dispatched from Seistan and Kerman to Raipur, whence it is hoped they will be able to control the Baluchis.

## Shiraz.

On the 24th November a large caravan, which was accompanied by M. Passek, consular-general, and M. Kadhnovsky, secretary of the Russian consular-general at Bushire, was attacked by tribesmen, said to be Boi-Ahmadis, a section of the Kuzghulis. Of the escort of two Russian Cossacks, one was killed and the other wounded. Two Persian Cossacks were wounded and ten or twelve other Persians with the caravan were killed. The attack took place at the Karagatch bridge between Khua-i-Zinnu and Dasht-i-Arjin. The Russian officials returned to the former place to which His Majesty's consul at Shiraz with Dr. Woolat, the telegraph doctor, at once rode out with an escort. This portion of the Bushire road has been disturbed throughout November, the trouble being attributed to the Kashgais, though whether with the approval of Soult-ed-Dowleh or not is not known. The telegraph line has been persistently interfered with by Kashgais, who also detained and beat a signaller when they met on the road. The Boi-Ahmadis have also been active on the Fars-Isfahan border, plundering caravans and in one instance killing five men. Their country is under the Governor of Behbahan. The latter district has been lately separated from Fars and entrusted to the Bakhtiars. Nothing short of a strong expedition is likely to bring the Boi-Ahmadis into order. Between Behbid and Shiraz and in the latter town itself the governor-general's prestige has so far sufficed to keep order, but filling support in troops or in money wherewith to raise troops it is unlikely that he will be able to maintain order. He is in any case powerless to punish tribesmen who commit outrages such as that on the Russian officials. His Majesty's Minister has strongly urged the Central Government to send immediate support to the governor-general. The latter has incurred some unpopularity by restricting the sale of opium. A riot occurred in Shiraz on the 28th November. It was soon over, but Mr. Bill was inclined to regard the situation in a serious light as the governor-general had no means of enforcing his authority and if he resigned there was no one to replace him. Seyyid Abdul Hussein, Lari, has been at Shiraz since the middle of November and is said to have been reconciled to the Kawamis.

## PERSIAN GULF.

## Bushire.

1. Twelve members, instead of six, having been elected irregularly to the local assembly, the Minister of the Interior has ordered a fresh election of six members. The assembly, having failed to elect a member to the National Assembly, has been requested by the Minister of the Interior to elect one of twenty men residing at Tehran, whose names have been telegraphed to it.

2. The Governor-General of Fars having at the end of October declared that he would not be responsible for the safety of the Firzabad route, caravans began to use the Kazerun road. Had the latter been placed in charge of the Kashgais, all might have been well, but as it was entrusted to their enemies the Kawamis, the Kashgais at once began to molest caravans. In addition to this, the khans of Daliki and Borasjan are exacting blackmail under the name of "road tax" at an exorbitant rate, and also compel travellers to buy forage at double the proper price.

3. The customs and contractor having failed in his contract, the customs hunches are now non-effective and preventive operations are at a standstill. Smugglers are taking full advantage of the opportunity thus afforded them.

## Lingah.

1. The report that Bastek had been taken proved correct, but its seizure, on the 29th September, was in no way connected with Seyyid Abdul Hussein, Lari. It appears that the Deputy Governor of Bastek, Soulat-ul-Mulk, being very unpopular, the people invited his enemy, Ghulian Hussein Khan, Yerevi, to come and turn him out. This the latter did without resistance, and he made the people pay somewhat heavily for his assistance. Latest reports are to the effect that he has left the town, leaving a deputy to govern it. The news of events at Bastek caused considerable alarm at Lingah, and many British subjects actually embarked for Bombay. His Majesty's consul at Bunder Abbas went to Lingah to report on the situation, and found that the alarm was exaggerated. Lingah has now assumed its normal condition.

2. The Italian cruiser "Elba" visited Lingah on the 18th October, having left Bunder Abbas on the 16th.

## Mohammerah.

1. Razuki Bashuri, a rich Turkish Christian merchant, residing at Nasiri, is purchasing two pumps, which he intends to set up at Wais, where he has leased 10 square miles of land for ten years from the sheikh, on the sole condition that the latter shall have 75 per cent. of the crops grown thereon. Razuki states that the pumps will be of about 25 horse power each, one of English make (Honsley), obtained from Messrs. Blackley and Cree, of Baghdad, the other an old one of French make, purchased from Haji Raveh. He expects to commence operations in December, and will have a qualified engineer to look after the pumps, and will take levels before deciding on the alignment of the canal. His Majesty's acting consul drew Razuki's attention to the fact that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's pipe line crossed the area leased to him, and advised him to enter into some satisfactory arrangement with that company through him before starting operations. This he promised to do. As the success or failure of this venture is likely to affect further irrigation schemes in Arabistan, the oil company has, on Lieutenant Wilson's advice, promised to help Razuki as far as it can. In Lieutenant Wilson's opinion, if anyone can make a success of the scheme it is Razuki, who has sufficient capital and is in touch with the people.

2. On the occasion of the Idi-El-Fitr, His Majesty's acting consul paid a visit in full uniform to the sheikh and took occasion to announce the decision of the Government to concede a salute of twelve guns to him and of five to his son when visiting a British warship. The sheikh expressed his satisfaction and gratitude at the announcement. He had heard at Koweit that the political resident at Bushire was proceeding from London to Tehran, and expressed great satisfaction at this news.

3. Messrs. Lloyd, Scott, and Co. propose to import oil to compete with German and American importations.

4. M. Brasseur, a French merchant dealing in English, French, and Russian goods—not Gorman—proposes to open a branch in Mohammerah in addition to his Bushiro branch, and possibly, later on, in replacement of it.

5. The Imperial Bank of Persia propose to open a branch here in December with Mr. Dewar-Dune as manager. The decision is wise, as Mohammerah is rapidly increasing in importance, and the existence of a branch of the bank here will still further facilitate its progress.

C. B. STOKES, Major,  
Military Attaché.

[46063]

No. 269.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 969. Confidential.)  
Sir,

Constantinople, December 11, 1909.

ALTHOUGH I called twice at the Russian Embassy since the receipt of your telegram No. 704 of the 6th December respecting the reported military action taken by the Turkish troops on the Persian frontier in the Urmil districts and also in the neighbourhood of Sulduz, it was only to-day that I found M. Tchirikow at home. I informed his Excellency of the substance of the messages I had received from you and added that, having had occasion to call on the Grand Vizier on the 7th instant, I had received assurances from his Highness that no forward movements of troops had

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taken place in the former regions, while as to the alleged encounter at Pasveh, the Turkish force at that post had merely taken precautionary measures against a force of Persian Kurds and regulars which appeared to be threatening them. The Grand Vizier had even denied that there were any Turkish troops to the east of the contested zone, but when I observed that Pasveh which was held by them was beyond question in Persian territory, his Highness had made no reply.

M. Tcharikow said he had had a similar explanation from the Grand Vizier whom he had asked for information, but like myself without making any representations. The information and instructions he had received from St. Petersburg were practically the same as those with which you had furnished me, but in view of the fact that the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs had stated that for the present the Persian Government did not wish for the assistance of the two Powers, he, M. Tcharikow had replied by telegraph to St. Petersburg that for the present joint representations to the Porte seemed to be unavailing and had recommended that no step should be made here except at the invitation of either Persia or Turkey.

In his opinion it was not desirable that Russia and Great Britain should appear to be imposing their intervention on those Powers, and it would be better to try to encourage them to negotiate a definite frontier, and if the negotiations came to a deadlock it would then be time enough for us to proffer our good offices. His view of the present action of the Turks was that they intended to occupy not only the contested zone but also a good many points on the Persian side of it, and then to offer to evacuate the latter on condition of being allowed to keep the former. I said that this was likely enough but I much doubted whether they would ever restore Pasveh which I understood possessed considerable strategic importance as commanding the best pass through the mountains in those regions, to which the Ambassador replied that it mattered very little in whose hands it was as the Turks could always occupy it whenever they pleased.

It struck me as rather curious that M. Tcharikow should display so much indifference to the possession of Pasveh, to the retention of which by Persia the Russian Government was quite recently attaching great importance.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

[45975]

No. 270.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)*

(No. 660.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 14, 1900.*

SIR G. BARCLAY was good enough to send me a copy of his despatch No. 213 of the 30th ultimo relative to an advance to the Persian Government. I called on M. Isvolsky this afternoon, and said that I gathered from Sir G. Barclay that it was of high importance to furnish the Persian Government with sufficient means to enable them to take measures for the purpose of re-establishing order and generally to set the administrative machine going. It was clear that the Persian Government could not continue for long to lead a hand-to-mouth existence, with every probability of a recurrence of disorders and disturbances, and a situation of anarchy might arise which would compel intervention, possibly on a considerable scale. This was an eventuality which both the British and Russian Governments would doubtless do all in their power to avoid, and it seemed to me therefore essential that all possible means should be adopted to prevent such a contingency. An advance of some kind, therefore, would appear imperative, even if securities and guarantees were not of a very substantial character. Such an advance would be in reality true economy. M. Isvolsky replied that the Russian Government were not at this moment disposed to be particularly amiable to the present régime. The Persian Government seemed, of set purpose, to be pursuing a policy of "pin-pricks" towards the Russian Government. The attitude of the Persian chargé d'affaires here was almost insupportable, and he was continually coming to the Ministry with a series of petty complaints of an unjustifiable nature. The Russians had undoubtedly by the dispatch of their troops to Ardabil saved that town from the Shahsevens and had restored it to the Persian Government. For this service the latter had not expressed a word of thanks, but had formulated annoying and groundless complaints against the Russian consul at that place. Again they were complaining because the Russian Government had declined to accord the exequatur to a perfectly impossible man whom they had selected as Persian consul-general at

Odessa. He could cite me other instances of the irritating policy which the Persian Government were pursuing, and of the indifference which they evinced towards securing the good-will of Russia. He himself did not see in what respect the new régime was any improvement over the old. I observed to M. Isvolsky that, in my opinion, it was extremely foolish of the Persian Government not to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards Russia, but that I had not suggested any favours to Persia. I had in my mind the interests of our two countries, which were directly involved if anarchy were to ensue in Persia. It was in the interests of us both that some order should be evolved in Persia, and it was painfully evident that the Government of that country, in their present penniless condition, were quite unable to take any practical measures to that end. M. Isvolsky replied that he feared that he would have the greatest difficulty in persuading M. Kokotsoff to risk placing any more Russian money in Persia. M. Kokotsoff had no *parti pris* against this or that Persian Government; he was solely concerned with the care of not pledging the Russian Treasury to advances which might be lost for ever. Russian finances were undoubtedly improving, but M. Kokotsoff was exceedingly parsimonious, and kept a very tight hand over the purse-strings. He understood that the Persian Government wished for an advance of about 500,000*l.*, of which the Russian share would be 250,000*l.* M. Kokotsoff would have difficulty, after the large sums already lent to Persia, to persuade the Duma that such an advance was justified. I suggested to M. Isvolsky that he should say before M. Kokotsoff the considerations which I had submitted, and explain that if matters grew so bad as to inevitably lead up to intervention, the latter would be infinitely more costly to the Russian Treasury than the present advance.

We then discussed other matters, but towards the end of my interview M. Isvolsky said he would like to return to the Persian question, and be asked me from what funds and in what manner would my Government make the advance. I told him that I could not reply off-hand, and I was unable to tell him *à l'avance* whether the Government would find the money or the Imperial Bank of Persia. He said that he did not wish to put it forward as a formal proposition, but, in view of the objections of M. Kokotsoff to untie his purse-strings, could I suggest some means by which a joint advance could be made without necessarily burdening the Russian Treasury at this moment? I said I did not quite understand. He replied that he had a dim recollection of our having on a previous occasion suggested some "transaction" which would have facilitated an advance from the Russian Government, and perhaps some proposal could now be made which would place him in a better position for overcoming the scruples and opposition of M. Kokotsoff. I confess I was puzzled with the vague hints of M. Isvolsky, and I did not know whether he had in mind some arrangement which would permit of Great Britain making the whole advance, on the understanding that Russia would later reimburse her share. I will look up the previous papers before the messenger leaves and see if I can ascertain if some such arrangement had been previously mooted. I have also a recollection of something of that nature having been put forward, but my memory may be at fault. I did not like to put the question point blank to M. Isvolsky, as I might have misunderstood him, and, in that case, I thought that I might offend him. I said that I would communicate with you and let him have a reply later.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

[45952]

No. 271.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 501.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 20, 1900.*

ACQUISITION of Persian Government's rights under articles 4 and 10 of oil concession.

Unless we can have the opportunity of satisfying ourselves as to the good faith of intending purchaser and his financial position by knowing his name, it would be impossible for us to undertake to support him.

The rights of the Persian Government should not be allowed to fall into the hands of a foreigner, and this consideration is more important than the acquisition by that Government of 50,000*l.*, which is only a minor point. We can, therefore, only consider Mr. Blake's request when we have the above information supplied to us.

Reference is to your telegram No. 314 of the 19th December.

[46305]

No. 272.

*Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received December 21.)*

Sir,

*Treasury Chambers, December 20, 1909.*

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury Mr. Mallet's letter of the 1st instant, respecting the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the cost of the survey which it is proposed to undertake in relation to the question of effecting a connection between Bushire and some point on the Jahrum-Aliabad-Firuzabad section of the Bunder Abbas-Lar-Jahrum-Shiraz route.

It is intended to entrust this duty to Lieutenant A. T. Wilson, who will be retained for the purpose in Persia for four months after his relief from the post of acting consul at Mohammerah, and the total expenditure to be shared is estimated at 2,000 rupees for contingent expenses in addition to Lieutenant Wilson's emoluments of 753 rs. 12 a. a-month for the period of his retention.

My Lords, having carefully considered this proposal, direct me to request you to inform Sir E. Grey that they agree to the suggested division between Indian and Imperial funds of the expenditure involved within the limits named above.

My Lords have also had before them Sir F. Campbell's letter of the 15th ultimo respecting the employment of Lieutenant Wilson on further survey work on the Karkah River, and in the circumstances represented, they are willing to defray from voted moneys a moiety of the cost involved in the arrangement of retaining, for a period not exceeding five months at a charge of 20l. a-month, the services of four men of the guard which had been lent to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

I am, &amp;c.

G. H. MURRAY.

[46384]

No. 273.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 816.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 21, 1909.*

Oil Company.

In reply to your telegram No. 501 of the 20th December, 1909, I have the honour to report that Mr. Maurice Blake is telegraphing to the financier in question to apply to the Foreign Office. He still refuses to reveal his name.

[46383]

No. 274.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)*

(No. 512.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 21, 1909.*

(R.) PERSIAN advance. I have received a letter from Minister for Foreign Affairs, of which following is substance. I will send copy by post to-night.

He considers that an advance of 500,000l. will not bring about a radical improvement in a situation which is chronic, and which requires more efficacious remedies. Any modest advance made to Persian Government would only postpone their decision in regard to conclusion of the loan, which is inevitable. He doubts if Russian Government would consent to make any advance to Persian Government unless the latter consented to ask assistance of Russians and of Englishmen for the realisation of a more or less considerable loan.

According to data in his possession, he is of opinion that present condition of Persian finances would allow of the conclusion of a loan of about 3,000,000l. with assistance of Russians and of Englishmen, on condition that a portion of loan should be at once affected to consolidation of or extinction of floating debts, which amount to about 1,000,000l. The support of Russia could only be granted on sure and real guarantees, and on condition that a commission of financial control be instituted. It would also be necessary to obtain from Persian Government a satisfactory settlement of certain questions which are of interest to Russia and England, such as question of railways, &c. (End of R.)

M. Isvolaky explains that the foregoing represents his personal views on the question, but he had already consulted with M. Kokovtsov, who generally concurs in his views. The Council of Ministers will have the matter laid before them within a few days.

[46358]

No. 275.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 324.)  
Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 21, 1909.*

THE Russian Ambassador called at this Office on the 18th instant on his return from leave of absence, and was received by Sir Charles Hardinge.

Speaking of Persia, His Excellency said that the Russian Minister of Finance was of opinion that it would be necessary, in order to achieve any real result in that country, to lend at once a large sum to the Persian Government, and for His Majesty's and the Russian Governments to make a serious demand for the control of its expenditure. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs was under the impression that this view was shared by His Majesty's Government.

Sir C. Hardinge told Count Benckendorff that M. Isvolaky was entirely mistaken, and that there could be no question at present of a larger loan than the joint advance which had been agreed on. It had yet to be seen what sort of control could be imposed and whether it could be effectual, and no money could be raised in this country for Persia till some order had been re-established in her finances and administration.

Sir C. Hardinge begged His Excellency to correct the false impression under which M. Isvolaky laboured, since His Majesty's Government could be no party to a loan larger than the advance already agreed on.

I am, &c.  
E. GREY.

[45415]

No. 276.

*Foreign Office to Treasury.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 21, 1909.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 18th February last, relative to the retention for a further period of the Indian guard stationed in the neighbourhood of Alwaz in connection with the operations of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from the India Office,\* relative to further expenditure which it has been found necessary to incur in order to replace the horses, saddlery, &c., lent by the 18th (Prince of Wales's Own) Tiwana Lancers for the use of the eight cavalrmen who accompanied the force.

In view of the fact that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury assented to the prolongation of the sojourn of the guard at Alwaz, I am to express the hope that they may see their way to sanction the charge on Imperial revenues of half the expense incurred in consequence, which, as you will observe, amounts to 152l. 8s. 11d.

I am, &c.  
LOUIS MALLET.

[46476]

No. 277.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 328.)  
Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 22, 1909.*

THE councillor of the Russian Embassy called at this Office on the 20th instant, and was received in my absence by Mr. Mallet. He came to say that M. Isvolaky was of opinion that, if the Porte did not approach the two Powers with a view to asking for their mediation in connection with the Turco-Persian frontier dispute, the two Governments should call the attention of the Ottoman Government in a friendly way

[46422]

No. 276\*.

*Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received December 22.)*

Sir,

*Treasury Chambers, December 21, 1909.*

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury Mr. Langley's letter of the 10th instant relative to the proposed temporary appointment of a consular representative of His Majesty at Birjand, and to reply I am to state, for the information of Secretary Sir E. Grey, that if, in the contingency anticipated by His Majesty's consul for Seistan, the arrangement should become necessary, my Lords will be prepared to accept as a charge to Imperial funds one-half of the expense involved, viz., of 285 rupees per mensem, subject to a possible subsequent reduction.

I am, &c.  
T. L. HEATH.

to the presence and action of Turkish troops in Persia, and ask them to verify the facts and recall their forces. They should at the same time advise the Persian Government to keep quiet on the frontier.

Mr. Mallet reminded M. de Euter that the Persian Government had expressed the desire that the two Powers should not intervene at present, but he replied that the Russian Government were aware of that, but thought that silence at this juncture would be misinterpreted by the Porte and considered as acquiescence in their action.

Mr. Mallet said that he would refer the matter to me, and that he thought that I should acquiesce in M. Isvolsky's wishes and instruct His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to make a joint representation to the Porte, provided that I received no communication from the Turkish Ambassador in the course of the next few days.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[45597]

No. 278.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 502.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 23, 1900.*

LEASE of land in Arabistan to a Russian subject for irrigation purposes.

Confidential enquiries might, I think, be made of the sheikh with regard to Abbas Aga's lease, and you may instruct His Majesty's consul at Mohammerah to do so. For the present it will not be necessary to mention the question to M. Poklewsky.

Reference is to your telegram No. 811 of the 15th December.

[46648]

No. 279.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 505.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 23, 1900.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Action on this subject appears to us absolutely necessary. It is not an exclusively Persian question.

Reference is to my telegram No. 711 of to-day to Constantinople.

[46648]

No. 280.

*Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.*

(No. 711.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 23, 1900.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

It appears from a conversation between the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg that a settlement of this question by negotiation might find favour with Turkey, and that Turkish Government suggest as first step a recommendation to Persian Government to avoid hostilities and bloodshed by remaining quiet.

M. Isvolsky desires to make two conditions: (1) that on the re-establishment of normal relations the disputed territory should at once be evacuated by the Turks; and (2) that Persian territory should be evacuated immediately.

You should support any representations made by Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. In the event of our being approached by the Turkish Government, I shall reply as intended by M. Isvolsky, but as yet we have heard nothing.

[46383]

No. 281.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1365.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 23, 1900.*

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

An account of a conversation with Count Benckendorff with reference to this is being forwarded to you by next mail.

His Majesty's Government sincerely hope that the Russian Government may see their way to contribute 200,000*l.* towards a joint advance of 400,000*l.* to be made immediately. The despatch mentioned above will acquaint you with the reasons why we cannot contemplate a large advance at present.

Sir G. Barclay fears that if this step, the importance of which he emphasises in a despatch just received, be not taken, the two Powers will soon be forced to intervene on a large scale.

Reference is to your telegram No. 512 of the 21st December.

[45931]

No. 282.

*Foreign Office to Anglo-Persian Oil Company.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 23, 1900.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant relative to the survey of part of South-Western Persia, which your company propose to undertake with the assistance of an officer of the Indian Survey Department.

I am to inform you, in reply, that on the morning of the same day (the 17th December) the draft of a telegram to the Government of India was communicated to this Department by the India Office, enquiring whether Mr. C. P. Tate would undertake this work at a salary of 800 rupees a-month, bringing with him from India a small establishment, the cost of which would be defrayed, as would the travelling expenses of the party to and from the country to be surveyed, for whom, while there, tents and carriage would be provided. The telegram added that the question of scale might be settled on the spot between your company's representative and Mr. Tate.

The concurrence of this Department in the terms of this message was at the same time requested, as it was understood that your company attached importance to the completion of the work before the end of the present cold season.

This concurrence was at once given, and it is understood that the telegram was dispatched forthwith.

I am, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[46604]

No. 283.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 24.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 23, 1900.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant, on the subject of railway construction in Persia by Great Britain and Russia. It is proposed that, as a condition of the loan for which the Persian Government have asked, the grant of preferential concessions should be made for the following lines:—

1. From Julfa via Tehran to Mohammerah, the southern section only being constructed by British capital.
2. From Tehran via Kerman to connect with the Indian railway system.
3. From Bunder Abbas to Kerman.
4. From Bunder Abbas via Shiraz to Ahwaz, with the option of a port at Khor Musa.
5. From Bushire via Aliabad to a point on the Bunder Abbas-Ahwaz line.

It is understood that there is no intention on the part of His Majesty's Government that any of these lines should be constructed immediately—indeed, most of them have not even been surveyed, but it is feared that, if the concessions are not at least applied for before the expiry of the Russo-Persian railway agreement towards the end of next year, they may fall into the hands of a third Power; and it is therefore proposed to approach the Russian Government with a view to making a joint demand at once upon the Persian Government.

Taking first the two lines in which alone Russia is interested, the proposal appears to involve certain serious risks. As regards the Julfa Mohammerah line, Sir Edward Grey recognises that simultaneous commencement at both ends, as well as

a satisfactory agreement with the Russian Government regarding tariffs, is an essential condition of the construction of the line, but he desires to postpone negotiations on these points until the concession has been granted. Apart, however, from the disadvantage to which we shall be exposed in settling the question of rates, if the negotiations on that point are conducted on a basis which commits us in advance to the eventual construction of the line, the proposal has the grave inconvenience of putting it in the power of the Russian Government (whose financial resources are a matter of conjecture only) to dictate the moment at which British capital shall be forthcoming—to an unknown amount—for the construction of the southern section. No indication is furnished in your letter of the sources from which such capital is expected to be found, but it must be recognised that, even if the Secretary of State in Council should decide that Indian funds could properly be applied to projects of this kind (a point on which Sir Edward Grey is well acquainted with Lord Morley's views), it may well happen that at the moment when the demand is made it will be impossible, owing to financial stringency, for India to reveal to make any contribution to the cost.

It may so doubt be urged that unless these risks are run the concession may be given to a third Power. There is, however, no guarantee that this will not happen even if the policy advocated by Sir G. Barclay be adopted. The construction of the line is not contemplated in the near future, but presumably there will be nothing to prevent the Persian Government, either *proprio motu* or at the instigation of others, from calling upon the concessionaires at any moment to carry out their concessions, and in the event of their being unable or unwilling to do so, from handing over the concessions to a third Power.

If these objections are as grave as they appear to be in the case of a purely commercial line, they are infinitely graver where most important political and strategical interests are involved, as in the case of the proposed connection of the Russian and Indian railway systems. It is true that there is no question at present of immediate construction, for which the Russian Government are believed to have no funds, and that the application for a concession is advocated for purely diplomatic reasons. As to the expediency of these reasons Sir Edward Grey is, of course, the best judge. But to regard the measure as one for the realisation of which "the moment is still remote," and at the same time to make a concession to "the anxiety of M. Isvolsky that the question should not be treated as outside the range of practical politics" seems to involve an irreconcilable contradiction, and to attempt to base a practical policy upon it seems likely to react unfavourably on the relations between the two countries in the long run.

No mention is made in Sir A. Nicholson's despatch of the route which the proposed through line is to take. In your letter under reply the route proposed is Julfa-Tehrán. It is assumed, therefore, that Sir Edward Grey has reason to believe that that route will be acceptable to M. Isvolsky, and that the Meshed-Seistan line will not be put forward. In any case, the objections, political and strategical, felt by Lord Morley to the latter line have already been stated and remain undiminished. The alignment now suggested has not so far as this Office is aware, hitherto been discussed, and in the absence of data it is difficult to criticise it. Even the point of view of local political relations it is so far less objectionable than the other that it avoids the eastern frontier of Afghanistan. But strategically the objections to it appear to be equally insuperable, whether, after leaving Kerman, it proceeds via Nushki to Quetta, or, descending to the Gulf at Charlar, runs along the coast to Kurrachee.

When, therefore, the time comes—as it may at a moment not of our own choosing, and probably not convenient to ourselves—when the Russian Government wish to translate into action a proposal accepted in principle by His Majesty's Government as within the range of practical politics, the fundamental contradiction between the views of the two Governments—however skillfully it may have been glossed over in the meantime—must emerge, with the result either that His Majesty's Government will be obliged to agree to the construction of a line to which they object, or that doubts will be cast upon their good faith.

Turning now to the other three lines, in which Russia has no direct interest, it may be observed that the present position of the two Powers in Persia is the result of a very delicate adjustment of their commercial and political interests and spheres of influence. The construction of British railways in the south, which may be forced on us against our will if concessions are obtained now, cannot fail to affect the balance, and may lead the Russian Government to seek readjustment by corresponding movements in the north. What those lines will be is unknown, but it is more than

probable that a railway to Meshed, with possibly an extension to the southern limit of the Russian sphere, will be one of them. To this line, as Sir Edward Grey was reminded in my letter of the 17th instant, the Government of India entertain the strongest objections—objections in which Lord Morley has concurred.

And with regard generally to the construction of railways in southern Persia, considered from the purely commercial point of view, it is open to doubt whether the advantage, even to British trade, would be as great as is sometimes supposed. There seems no probability that the Russian policy of differential rates will ever be so far modified in our favour as to enable our trade to compete successfully with Russian trade in areas fed by their railways. While as regards the south, the existence of British railways with cheap rates will be a strong inducement to Russia and Germany to send their goods in increasing quantities by subsidised steamers to the Gulf ports. In any case, Indian trade, in competition with British and foreign, stands to gain little.

The conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing considerations is that if the main object at present is not the construction of railways in Persia, but the securing of concessions for the purpose of keeping other Powers out, this can be more certainly effected by an extension of the existing "sterilising" agreement for a further term of years. Sir G. Barclay foresees great difficulty in inducing the Persian Assembly to grant the concessions, and it seems probable that they, at all events, would be less unwilling to acquiesce in an extension of the agreement, to which this country should also be a party. It is a question, therefore, whether our efforts should not now be concentrated upon an endeavour to bring the Russian Government to this point of view, and the small loan for which the Persian Government have already asked be outweighed with such conditions as are proposed in your letter under reply.

A further advantage of this course would be that in the meantime the situation would have greatly developed. For example, the fate of the Bagdad Railway, and the part destined to be played by other Powers in the Middle East, would be known. Is it certain that arrangements satisfactory to Russia in connection with the Bagdad Railway cannot be devised, which will remove the necessity she now feels for railway expansion in Persia?

Again, Sir A. Nicholson (in his despatch No. 628 of the 28th November) expresses the opinion that M. Isvolsky would not scruple to admit Germany to the neutral zone in Persia as compensation for any assurances she may be willing to give him as to the Bagdad Railway. This view is inconsistent with the desire to exclude third Powers which underlies the present proposals, and seems to point even more decidedly to a policy of further "sterilisation" as that which His Majesty's Government should endeavour to carry through.

In conclusion, Lord Morley agrees to the proposal to appoint a committee to consider the question in consultation with Major Cox; and the secretaries in the Military and Political departments of this Office will represent the Secretary of State. Such large and important interests are involved in the policy outlined in your letter call for the most anxious and deliberate consideration.

I have, &c.  
R. RITCHIE.

[46614]

No. 284.

Mr. F. C. Strick to Foreign Office.—(Received December 24.)

Bulfinch House, Leadenhall Street, London,  
December 23, 1909.

Sir, REFERRING to my previous letter, I now beg to enclose copies of further cablegrams exchanged between my firm and its Bussrah house, and its Bussrah and Tehran agents on the subject of Hormuz oxide.

I may also mention that Mr. Martin Ellinger, of Manchester, called at my London office yesterday, and enquired the rate of freight for 6,000 tons of oxide, for shipment in January from Hormuz. He was informed that my firm had no available tonnage, and he is now looking out for a vessel on the open market.

I have, &c.  
FRANK C. STRICK.



Inclosure in No. 284.

*Copies of Telegrams exchanged between Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co. (Limited), London, and Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co. (Limited), Bussorah, Messrs. A. and T. J. Malcolm, Bushire, and Mr. David Brown, of Tehran.*

Received from Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co., Bussorah, December 14 :—

"Probably week; Reis advising us immediately receives reply."

Sent to Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co., Bussorah, December 21 :—

"Have you any news of Reis? We are very anxious."

Received from Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co., Bussorah, December 22 (23) :—

"Reis: waiting reply."

Received from Messrs. A. and T. J. Malcolm, Bushire, December 22 :—

"Moin-ut-Tujjar offering 2,000 tons Hormuz oxide, December shipment, Bombay, freight 5s. per ton of 2,240 lb. Please send instructions forthwith."

Sent to Messrs. A. and T. J. Malcolm, Bushire, December 22 :—

"Are we to understand you have authority from Moin-ut-Tujjar engage freight for 2,000 tons, Bombay, 5s."

Received from Messrs. A. and T. J. Malcolm, Bushire, December 23 :—

"We have a telegram from Moin-ut-Tujjar informing us if you will accept 5s. per ton of 2,240 lb., 2,000 tons, December shipment."

Sent to Mr. D. Brown, Tehran, December 14 :—

"Whichever offer you have made, presume includes all oxide mined waiting for shipment."

Received from Mr. D. Brown, Tehran, December 15 :—

"Submitted both offers for the consideration of Persian Government to include all oxide, &c., mined. Persian Government, if they consider offer favourable, general terms will be subject to further discussion."

Sent to Mr. D. Brown, Tehran, December 20 :—

"Although your offers include all oxide mined, it is possible Moin-ut-Tujjar, in anticipation of losing concession, may have drawn on Ellinger and Co., Manchester, or A. Weir and Co. against stock Hormuz, in which case they might claim stock."

Sent to Mr. D. Brown, Tehran, December 22 :—

"For your information, Moin-ut-Tujjar shipping shortly 2,000 tons for Bombay. What is the present position of negotiations?"

Sent to Mr. D. Brown, Tehran, December 23 :—

"Ellinger and Co., Manchester, want us carry 6,000 tons oxide, shipment in January; replied no tonnage available. If this quantity shipped by other ship, also 2,000 tons Bombay, our offer will have to be amended, because, besides loss of oxide, we shall have to meet competition, which would seriously affect prices here. Telegraph what do you propose to do [regarding]."

"From to-morrow to Tuesday send telegrams to 'Ardia,' London, employing Ardia's [F. C. Strick and Co.'s] private and A.B.C. code."

No. 285.

[46631]

*Mr. F. C. Strick to Foreign Office.—(Received December 24.)*

*Boltic House, Leadenhall Street, London,  
December 23, 1909.*

Sir,  
SINCE writing my previous letter of to-day on the subject of Ormuz oxide, the following telegram has been received from Mr. D. Brown, my firm's agent at Tehran :—

"Morteza Khan Sanied-Dowleh pressing matter with Parliament. He hopes to give favourable reply shortly."

I have, &c.

FRANK C. STRICK.

No. 286.

[46653]

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 24.)*

(No. 517.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 24, 1909.*

JOINT advance to Persian Government.

Please refer to Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 512 of the 21st December, received the 23rd December.

Figures quoted by M. Isvolsky do not represent position to-day.

The present customs' revenue, if not relieved of such charges as the Cossack Brigade, cannot bear at the utmost more than 2,500,000, additional borrowing, and this only will be possible if the bank's advances, which amount to at least 1,800,000, and not to 1,000,000, are paid off with part of the proceeds.

The large loan, such as M. Isvolsky contemplates, would presumably include a settlement of at least British and Russian, if not all foreign claims. These latter must exceed 300,000, so that the Persian Government would not have at their disposal more than the amount for which they now ask from any operation secured on the customs' revenue while carrying its present charges.

If the first three of the conditions suggested in my telegram No. 800 are accepted and observed loyally, this amount will, I consider, be sufficient to enable the Persian Government, if the two neighbouring Powers show a fair measure of sympathy, to re-establish its normal authority and to stand alone.

With foreign experts to guide the financial administration, and with sufficient power in the hands of the Government to enable it to collect taxes, expenditure ought not, in future, to exceed revenue—apart from the customs which will then be fully charged.

Taking into consideration the above facts, the lengthy negotiations inseparable from a large loan, cancelled for at present even if His Majesty's Government were willing to facilitate it, the urgent need that the Persian Government should be supplied with the smaller sum for which it has applied if it is to enforce authority, I trust that terms may be speedily arranged with Russia and communicated to Persian Government, on which the two Powers will agree to make the joint advance of 400,000.

In the foregoing observations I have supposed the customs' revenue to be the only available security. It is the most convenient, of course. The profits of the mint, which amount to 5,000, per mensem, must be mentioned among supplementary securities for borrowing.

No. 287.

[46652]

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 24.)*

(No. 518.)

(Telegraphic.) En clair.

*Tehran, December 24, 1909.*

CIRCULAR Russian Minister tells me there are now about 1,100 Russian troops at Kazvin, and some number at Tabreez and at Ardabil.

(Sent to India.)

[45942]

No. 288.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 24, 1909.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant relative to a proposed concession for the improvement of the communications between Bunder Abbas and Kerman.

With regard to the point raised in the last paragraph of the telegram from the Government of India, copy of which was enclosed in that communication, I am to state that in any further communication which His Majesty's Government may make to the Russian Government on the subject of railway construction in Persia, they will certainly repeat the request already proffered in their memorandum of the 14th October, 1908, that the line from Ashkhabad to Meshed may not be built; and I am moreover to point out that, as clearly appears from the Russian memorandum of the 15th August, 1908, there is but little fear, in view of the financial considerations involved, that this work will in any case be carried out at present.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey concurs in Viscount Morley's proposal that a final answer to the Indo-European Telegraph Company should be deferred pending the receipt of a further communication from this department on the subject of end-marking railway concessions in Persia.

I am, &amp;c.

W. LANGLEY.

[46656]

No. 289.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 25.)*

(No. 514.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 25, 1909.*

TURKISH troops on the Turco-Persian frontier. Your telegram No. 711 of the 23rd December to Constantinople.

The communication which the Turkish Ambassador had made to M. Isvolsky was read to me by the latter to-day. There was nothing in it, so far as I could perceive, on which to base an assumption that the Porte would be willing to come to some settlement of the frontier difficulty by means of mediation. The Minister for Foreign Affairs suggested that, as he had received a communication on the subject of the movements of Persian troops in the neighbourhood of Soldouz, he might take it as affording an opportunity for proposing mediation; by he now considered it wiser that the representations at Constantinople should be limited to a suggestion that the Turkish troops at Soldouz, which without any possible doubt is in Persian territory, should be withdrawn, and that the question of mediation should be left alone.

[46662]

No. 290.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 25.)*

(No. 819.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 26, 1909.*

HIS Majesty's consul in Soistan reports that Howson, who is in charge of His Majesty's vice-consulate at Birjard, is treated with scant consideration and respect by his Russian colleague. I informed M. Poklewski confidentially, and he will no doubt convey the necessary hint to his consul.

Major O'Connor has now telegraphed to the Government of India recommending Howson's appointment as vice-consul, which he believes would greatly help to smooth the situation. I concur. Please refer to my telegram No. 680 of the 22nd August.

[46695]

No. 291.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 26.)*

(No. 820.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Tehran, December 26, 1909.*

POLICING of southern roads.

Since my consultation with Major Cox (see my telegram No. 772 of the 6th November) the outlook has altered.

The negotiations which are now in progress for a joint loan may cause a gendarmerie to be formed and trained by foreign instructors acceptable to Great Britain and Russia. It will be difficult if we hold out for the employment of Englishmen, even civilians, on the southern roads, to urge the Russian Government to omit from the conditions on which her share in the advance will be made conditional, the demand for the engagement of Russian military instructors in the north. The advance might be wrecked by such a condition, and it may therefore prove politic to leave to the Persian Government the selection of foreign instructors in the south, subject, of course, to our approval, and to waive our demand for the employment of Englishmen.

Until the result of the loan negotiations is known, could we not hold our scheme in abeyance?

[46658]

No. 292.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 26.)*

(No. 516.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*St. Petersburg, December 26, 1909.*

PROPOSED advance to Persia.

I saw M. Isvolsky to-day, and left with him a letter, in which I enumerated the objections entertained by His Majesty's Government to granting a large loan to Persia, and expressed the hope that the proposal would be dropped by the Russian Government. In my letter I urged that the Russian Government should join us in making an advance of 400,000*l.*, gave the various reasons why this course commended itself to His Majesty's Government, and pointing out how urgently necessary it was that the Persian Government should be provided with some funds, &c.

M. Isvolsky told me that he personally was anxious that in this matter the two Governments should act in harmony, but he feared that it would be a very difficult matter to induce the Minister of Finance to join in the advance. I replied that it was of the greatest importance that we should act in harmony in this matter, and begged M. Isvolsky to impress this aspect of the question on the Minister of Finance.

[46665]

No. 293.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 26.)*

(No. 364.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Constantinople, December 26, 1909.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

With reference to your telegram No. 711 of the 23rd December, M. Teliarykoff has informed me that he has telegraphed to his Government that, in his opinion, the language of the Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg was too vague, and does not warrant action here on the part of Russian Government. His Excellency added that it was most improbable that the Porte will agree to a condition which requires them to evacuate all points east of the disputed zone, which they have hitherto occupied. I agree that it is most improbable.

[46692]

No. 294.

*Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 27.)*

(No. 365.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Pera, December 27, 1909.*

PERSIAN frontier. My telegram No. 364 of 26th December.

Russian Ambassador has been instructed to make communication to Porte.

[46853]

No. 295.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)*

(No. 668.)  
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, December 21, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a letter which I have received from M. Isvolsky respecting the question of an advance to the Persian Government.

I have, &c.

A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 295.

*M. Isvolsky to Sir A. Nicolson.*

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur,

*Saint-Petersbourg, le 7 (20) décembre, 1909.*

JE n'ai pas manqué d'examiner la question de l'avance de 5,000,000 de roubles à faire au Gouvernement persan, question dont vous m'avez entretenu ces derniers temps et qui forme l'objet de votre aide-mémoire du 27 novembre et de votre lettre du 4 (17) décembre, ainsi que d'un dégrèvement détaillé de M. Poklowsky. Cette affaire sera soumise en de ces jours à l'appréciation du Conseil des Ministres. En attendant, je ne puis que vous exposer mon opinion personnelle à ce sujet.

A mon avis, une avance de 5,000,000 de roubles ne pourrait guère contribuer à une amélioration radicale de l'état de choses en Perse. Il n'est plus question à l'heure qu'il est d'une crise aiguë que ce pays traverserait, mais plutôt d'un état chronique qui exige des moyens plus efficaces. Loia d'atteindre le but désiré, toute avance modique faite au Gouvernement persan ne contribuerait qu'à ajourner sa décision de conclure l'emprunt inévitable. Aussi me paraît-il douteux que mon Gouvernement consente à verser à la Perse une avance quelconque, à moins que le Gouvernement persan ne demande simultanément l'appui de la Russie et de l'Angleterre pour la réalisation d'un emprunt plus ou moins considérable.

D'après les données que nous possédons, je crois pouvoir dire que l'état actuel des finances de la Perse lui permet de conclure, avec le concours de la Russie et de l'Angleterre, un emprunt extérieur d'une trentaine de millions de roubles environ, à condition bien entendu qu'une partie de cet emprunt soit affectée immédiatement à la consolidation ou à l'amortissement complet de toutes les dettes flottantes du Gouvernement Persan, qui atteignent, à ce qu'il paraît, le chiffre d'une dizaine de millions de roubles à peu près. Cette première opération exécutée, il resterait à la disposition du Gouvernement du Schah une vingtaine de millions de roubles, qui lui suffiraient probablement pour faire face aux dépenses nécessaires par l'introduction de réformes sérieuses.

Il va sans dire que l'appui de la Russie ne saurait être accordée à la Perse que contre des garanties sûres et réelles et à la condition qu'une commission de contrôle financier soit instituée. A ce propos il est à noter que dans leurs pourparlers avec les représentants de la Russie et de l'Angleterre les Ministres persans n'ont pas abordé la question de garanties. Il sera également nécessaire, en outre, d'obtenir du Gouvernement du Schah une solution satisfaisante de quelques affaires qui touchent de près aux intérêts de la Russie et de l'Angleterre, comme, par exemple, la question des chemins de fer, &c.

Je crois devoir ajouter que les considérations que je viens d'émettre sont partagées en traits généraux par mon collègue des Finances, avec lequel j'ai eu un échange de vues à ce sujet.

Votre sincèrement dévoué,  
ISVOLSKY.

[46889]

No. 296.

*Sir A. Johnstone to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)*

(No. 160.)  
Sir,

*Copenhagen, December 22, 1909.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 61 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that I called last week at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and told Herr Seavenius that I had drawn the attention of His Majesty's Government to the article in the "Danaebrog" respecting the proposed expedition by members of the Daaisk Geographical Society to the countries surrounding the Persian Gulf.

I informed his Excellency that you naturally took an interest in the proposed journey to the countries in question, and I added that I was instructed to enquire in the most friendly way whether he would be kind enough to supply me with any details as to the exact scope of the expedition.

Herr Seavenius told me that he quite understood the desire of His Majesty's Government for details, and he would willingly send for Dr. Olufsen and request him to give him all the information he could on the subject.

When I called to-day at the Ministry Herr Seavenius handed me an English translation of a portion of a written statement made to his Excellency by Dr. Olufsen, copy of which I have the honour to enclose.

His Excellency added that Dr. Olufsen had told him that it entirely depended on the generosity of subscribers whether the proposed expedition ever took place or not. No commercial agents would be attached to the scientific explorers, but those gentlemen would keep their eyes open and would report if they perceived any kind of opening for Danish commerce in the region visited.

I have, &c.

ALAN JOHNSTONE.

Inclosure in No. 296.

*Extract from Statement made to Herr Seavenius by Dr. Olufsen.*

(Translation.)

IT is not possible for the present to give details concerning the plans of the expedition, as its duration and the extension of the explorations will depend on what amount the committee of the society may be able to gather.

The working field will be the countries surrounding the Persian Gulf. The purpose is scientific, geological, ethnographical, archaeological, linguistic, and botanical researches and studies of miscegenation in the said countries.

The expedition is supposed to last about one year, and will consist exclusively of Danish scientists.

[46986]

No. 297.

*The Imperial Bank of Persia to Foreign Office.—(Received December 28.)*

Dear Mr. Mallet,

*25, Abchurch Lane, London, December 24, 1909.*

I AM much obliged for yours of yesterday.

On the 22nd we had a wire from Tehran that a mint contract for 200,000*l.* at 97½ had been obtained, and that in future all minting is to be on account of the Persian Government, the Imperial Bank of Persia to import all the silver they may require (i.e., the Persian Government). We consider the above satisfactory, as also what you say about the interest due and the 30,000*l.* worth of silver misappropriated by the mint.

Wishing all at the Foreign Office the compliments of the season, yours sincerely,  
T. JACKSON.

[46808]

No. 298.

*Mr. Wallace to Foreign Office.—(Received December 28.)*6, Langford Place, St. John's Wood, London,  
December 26, 1909.

Dear Mr. Mallet,

It appears to have been Christmas that delayed D'Arcy's letter to me. He posted it on the 23rd, but it was only delivered here at 10.45 P.M. on the 24th. He knows absolutely nothing, and has not heard even a rumour. Your information has come as a great blow to him—as to all of us. The following are extracts from his letter:—

"I am afraid that I cannot help you with ideas, but one thing is certain—the sale must be stopped—for the fact that the Persian Government is our partner in the stronghold of the concession. Could we form a syndicate to buy half the Persian Government's rights and interests? They must not sell the whole. We might then stipulate that the other half should never be sold. The Foreign Office must help us at this juncture, and must be persuaded not to support this 'English financier' in this instance, although in other circumstances it may be in the ordinary course of business to do so. This is not an ordinary business; it does not make for expansion of interests, this bribe to a Government which is hard up. The Persian Government's interest in this concession is a large prospective item of national revenue, and they should not be allowed to sell it any more than they would be allowed to sell the revenue of one of their ports. Have you any means of finding out whether Cassel is in this? It is remote, but possible. I have thought and thought about who the 'financier' is? but, but I cannot stop him."

With regard to the name suggested by Mr. D'Arcy, I have no means of finding out, but probably you have. The suggestion is obviously made at random only. I agree with all that Mr. D'Arcy has written. What we dread is not the man who will, or may, buy—wherever he may be or whatever his nationality. What we dread and protest against is the alienation from the Persian Government of any portion of its prospective revenue from our undertaking. We stand committed to this undertaking both in very large sums of money and in a very great deal of past risk; also of labour, past, present, and future. We have entered upon this undertaking largely with the assistance and wholly, we believe, with the approval of the British Government, and I hope, therefore, that we may be allowed to appeal to you now to assist us in warding off what may in conceivable circumstances prove a very serious blow at our industry.

Would it be possible for you to request His Britannic Majesty's Minister in Tehran to endeavour to prevent, by all means in his power, the alienation by the Persian Government of this prospective revenue?

Failing that, i.e., if, in his opinion, the Persian Government will find a buyer and will sell in spite of his efforts, would it be possible for you to ascertain from him whether he can persuade them to agree to sell half their rights to us, with the stipulation detailed by Mr. D'Arcy as to the other half.

I shall not be in town to-morrow, the 27th, but shall be at your disposal any other day this week if you care to send for me.

Apologising for the length of my letter, I am, &c.

E. W. WALLACE.

[46695]

No. 299.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1371.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

SIR G. BARCLAY'S telegram No. 820 of the 26th December.

If Russian Government will drop condition as to employment of military instructors in north, it will be better, in view of considerations advanced, to waive our proposal as to British instructors for southern road-guards, as far as any rate as concerns the present advance, the immediate settlement of which is more important.

We might leave the selection of the instructors to the Persian Government, subject to our approval, and the Russian Government might perhaps follow same course.

[47086]

No. 300.

*Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received December 29.)*

Sir,

*Board of Trade, December 28, 1909.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 16th November, and to previous correspondence on the subject of the provision of road guards in Southern Persia, I am directed by the Board of Trade to state, for the information of Sir E. Grey, that they have caused enquiries to be made of the principal British firms engaged in the Persian trade with regard to the proposed surcharge on imported goods.

As a result of these enquiries the Board have ascertained that it is probable that considerable objection would be taken, by some at least of the firms interested, to the levy at all the ports of the proposed surcharge in order to provide funds for the protection of the route inland from one port alone. The Board gather, however, that there would not be the same objection to the imposition of such a surcharge if levied solely on goods entering at Bushire, the road inland from Bushire being the only one proposed to be patrolled.

It would further seem that if the estimate of the cost of a modified scheme given by Acting Consul Bill in his despatch of the 1st September last be accepted as approximately correct, a 10 per cent. surcharge at Bushire would, so far as can be judged from statistics available, be sufficient to provide the funds necessary for the adoption of that scheme.

In view of these considerations, the Board are strongly of opinion that it would be desirable that the proposal to be made to the Persian Government should have in view a surcharge of 10 per cent. on the import duties, collected at Bushire only, the proceeds to be devoted, in the manner suggested, for the security of the routes inland from that port. If the scheme be approved by that Government, it will of course be necessary to arrange for the proceeds of the surcharge to be paid over direct to the representatives of the Indo-European Telegraph Department by the customs authorities at Bushire, to stipulate that the surcharge shall not continue in force beyond a definitely limited period (say three years) without the consent of His Majesty's Government, and to provide for the issue of all necessary directions to the road guard officers that their primary duty is to ensure the security of the roads as trade routes, and only incidentally the security of the telegraph plant.

I have, &amp;c.

G. J. STANLEY.

[46653]

No. 301.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.*

(No. 1372.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

ADVANCE to Persian Government.

*Foreign Office, December 29, 1909.*

With reference to your telegram No. 512 of the 21st December, reporting receipt of letter from M. Isvolsky, you may inform him, in reply, of the substance of Tehran telegram No. 817 of the 24th December.

[47185]

No. 302.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 30.)*

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India dated the 25th December, relative to a journey by Major P. M. Sykes to Krasnovodsk.

*India Office, December 29, 1909.*

Inclosure in No. 302.

Major Sykes to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Meshed, November 6, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to make the following report on my recent journey to and from Krasnovodsk.

2. At Kuchan I noticed that fine substantial premises were being erected for the Russian Bank, and there seemed to be more life than formerly in the streets.

Askabad was much more flourishing than at the end of 1906, when the whole country was overshadowed by terrorism. Possibly the improved state of affairs is partly due to the fact that the late head of the police is in prison, like many of his colleagues in Transcaspia. The railway service still scorns to run in connection with the steamers, and no railway guide was procurable at the station, where the time of arrival at Krasnovodsk was given as 3 A.M. by a porter and as 10 A.M. by the deputy station master. We actually arrived at 8 A.M. ! Thanks to the kindness of the governor-general, two *coupés* were reserved for my party going to Krasnovodsk and one *coupé* for me on the return journey. Krasnovodsk, as usual, swarmed with officials ; but espionage seemed to be rather slackier than three years ago. In other words, I was not followed about.

3. Upon returning to Askabad, I met Mr. Rennie, and we called on General Evreinov that evening. The governor-general is a very small, determined-looking man, somewhat resembling the portraits of General Marina of Mellila, with a good knowledge of French. At first he appeared to us to be somewhat brusque, and he started by asking me why we did not allow Said Ahmad Beg Jamshedi to have his family.

I explained to his Excellency, at some length, our position in respect to Afghanistan, and added that the Afghan authorities were very difficult to move. I also enquired whether, if the family were handed over, the Jamshedis would cease to raid across the frontier. To this his Excellency replied that there were always raids on the frontier. His Excellency acknowledged that most of the Jamshedis were returning to Afghanistan.

As his Excellency begged me to try and arrange for the family of Said Ahmad Beg to be sent to him I said that I would report his wishes, but that I could not hold out much hope of their being carried out, as the matter did not rest with us.

4. General Evreinov next said that he wondered whether the British Government meant to work in with Russia, and added that he personally admired the English, but that he could not believe that we really meant to be their friends. Mr. Rennie explained that the *culte* was in its infancy and that time would show its value. His remarks visibly impressed his Excellency.

5. We were then invited to dine at the officers' club, which is a spacious building with a theatre, billiard-room, library, &c. The most curious thing about it was that not a single officer entered it the whole time we were there ; and it appears that the bicyclists' club is more popular, possibly because the general does not frequent it.

6. The general next broached the question of the badness of the Meshed *chaussée*, and remarked that he supposed I should oppose any improvement to it. I replied that, on the contrary, I would help on any action taken to remove what was a source of delay, discomfort, and even danger. Mr. Rennie said that he would see the road and that if the Russian legation took up the question, he would shortly be at Tehran, after having acquired much information on the subject. He added that he felt sure that the British legation would be quite ready to support any scheme which was so obviously for the public good.

7. The general gradually became more and more friendly, and he next referred to the currency question, and was much interested when I explained that much of the huge export of Persian krams to Merv reached India via Herat and Quetta and returned to Persia via Bushiire. It appears that this question is a burning one, as, in parts of Transcaspia, krams alone are accepted and the governor-general considers that Russia always loses on the exchange. I was pressed to advise on this matter, but explained that I did not know enough about it.

8. Again his Excellency asked me to express an opinion as to whether it was necessary to retain the two squadrons of Cossacks at Meshed during the winter. To this I frankly replied that I could not express any opinion, but I pointed out that, with Russia's gigantic military resources, the locking up of two sotnias of Cossacks was a more bagatelle. His Excellency appreciated the compliment, and replied that the holding of India by 75,000 British troops was the military marvel of the age.

[2]

No. 304\*.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 822.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

PERSIAN telegraphs.

*Tehran, December 31, 1909.*

Please refer to my telegram No. 522 of the 1st July and my despatch No. 150 of the 1st August, 1909.

Director of Persian section of Indo-European Telegraph Department has received an application from the Minister of Telegraphs for the services of an officer for six months to superintend the reorganisation of the Persian telegraph administration. Should there be no objection, Barker suggests New for the task.

The officer will be employed in drawing up a budget estimate and preparing a code of regulations for the direction of the employés; experience of Persian and of telegraph administration and a knowledge of the language are necessary. Such a man can only be found among the Indo-European Telegraph Department staff. I trust therefore that the same objection will not be raised by the Russian Government as on the previous occasion.

A very desirable reform will be indefinitely postponed if application is refused.

[1084]

3 E\*

9. Finally, his Excellency insisted on seeing us back to our hotel, walking arm-in-arm, and, in saying good-bye with the utmost cordiality, he said that next time I passed through I must be his guest or he would never forgive me.

10. In conclusion, sir, I would venture to suggest that if some concession, however slight, could be made in the way of meeting General Evreinov's views on the Jamshedi question, the effect would, we both consider, be extremely good. I also venture to think, as does Mr. Rennie, that the hours we spent with his Excellency have tended to remove some misgivings and doubts and to improve our relations with so important a personage as the Governor-General of Transcaspia.

I have, &amp;c.

P. M. SYKES.

*His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Meshed.*

[46808]

No. 303.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.*

(No. 511.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

*Foreign Office, December 30, 1909.*

D'ARCY oil concession. Acquisition of rights of Persian Government under articles 4 and 10. See your telegram No. 816 of the 21st December.

Strong objection is taken by the oil company to the proposed sale. In view of this, Mr. Blake should be told that any support from you is impossible.

With regard to the idea entertained by the Persian Government of alienating their interest in the concession, you should dissuade them strongly from such a course. If, however, they will undertake never to dispose of one-half their rights, the oil company are prepared to buy the other half. In the event of other means of discussion proving unsuccessful, you may inform the Persian Government of this proposal.

The oil company regard the question as one of the greatest importance.

No application from any intending purchaser has been received here up to now.

[47274]

No. 304.

*Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received December 31.)*

Sir,

*Treasury Chambers, December 30, 1909.*

IN reply to Mr. Mallet's letter of the 21st instant, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to state, for the information of Secretary Sir Edward Grey, that they sanction the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the expenses (304l. 17s. 10d.) incurred in order to replace the horses and equipment lent by the 18th Prince of Wales's Own Tiwana Lancers in 1907 for the use of the Indian guard at Ahwaz.

This sanction is, however, only given on the understanding that the horses and equipment of the guard, when no longer required at Ahwaz or for the purpose described in Foreign Office letter of the 15th ultimo, will be used for the necessary purposes of establishments in Persia to which His Majesty's Government contribute, or that in case of sale, one-half of the proceeds will be credited to the Imperial Exchequer.

I am, &amp;c.

T. L. HEATH.

[3]

No. 305.

*Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 823.)

(Telegraphic.) En clair.

*Tehran, December 31, 1909.*

PERSIAN Government's forces, after defeating several times Karadaghis under Rahim Khan's son, have entered Ahaz, where they were welcomed by the population. Karadaghis have fled northwards towards Shekerh, where Rahim Khan is believed to be.

[46808]

No. 306.

*Foreign Office to Anglo-Persian Oil Company.**Foreign Office, December 31, 1909.*

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th instant relative to the attempt by a British financier to acquire the interest of the Persian Government in the so-called D'Arcy Oil Concession.

I am to inform you in reply that, in view of the terms of your letter, Sir E. Grey has addressed a telegram to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran stating that your Company have the strongest objection to this transaction, and instructing him to inform Mr. Maurice Blake, the representative of the financier in question, that he is unable to support his application.

Sir G. Barclay has been further instructed strongly to dissuade the Persian Government from alienating their interest in the concession, and, in the event of failure, to attain this object by other means, has been authorised to inform them that your Company are willing to purchase half their rights on condition that they will undertake not to part with the remainder.

It was intimated that your Company attached the greatest importance to this matter.

I am, &amp;c.

LOUIS MALLET.